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World Dominion and The World To-day

An International Review of Christian Progress

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EDITORIAL

Missions and Money

WE welcomed the able articles which appeared on this subject in the last two numbers of WORLD DOMINION. They said most effectively what this magazine has been saying for thirty years. In the early years of this century I was visited in Peking by a Christian business man who was deeply interested in world evangelization at home and abroad and who retired from business to travel around the world and to make a special study of the missionary enterprise. Little did I think that the genial man who shook hands with me and who was to me but a casual visitor was to be my dearest friend and that we were to be partners in the work of world-survey, in the study of missionary principles, and in the promotion of world-evangelization.

Sidney James Wells Clark always thought in world-terms. When he studied a part it was in relation to the whole. He held that it was the primary task of the Christian Church to evangelize the whole world. He stood for three things: (1) World survey, which would be a guide to the disposition of forces; (2) widespread evangelization, so that all might hear the Gospel; (3) the creation of indigenous Churches, self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating from the moment of their inception. Sidney Clark met hundreds and hundreds of missionaries, and sowed the seed of the principles which he advocated. Everywhere he made friends, except when he criticized some of the methods adopted by missionary societies, in which case the attitude was quite naturally a defensive one. "Who is this business man who is trying to teach us our job?" was the kind of reception which was very often accorded to his articles and papers. In these days when lay witness is receiving more attention it is well to remember this layman who influenced thinking in every mission-field of the world.

At the time which I am recalling I was the secretary of the China Advisory Council of the London Missionary Society, and I travelled much with him. Two of the most outstanding practising advocates of New Testament principles were often quoted by Clark, one was McGowan of China, who founded indigenous Churches before Allen wrote *Missionary Methods* or Clark travelled, the other was Gale of Madagascar. These two men of

the London Missionary Society must be included in the roll of justly famous missionaries. I stayed with Clark in uncomfortable little inns in China and his sense of humour never left him. "In these inns," he said, "you can get bed and breakfast for twopence, but it isn't worth it." Where there was danger he said, "I have no arms, I shall have to use my legs."

A brief sketch of one of Clark's bits of work will epitomize the practice of his principles. He went to a mission-station in China. The missionaries, as missionaries naturally do, showed him over the station-houses, schools, hospital and church. When he had seen all these he asked a question which no other visitor had ever asked, "What about the unfinished task? There are millions of people in the district for which you are nominally responsible. Can you reach them by your present methods?" These methods were the usual conventional "station" ones, in a head-station and some out-stations. If funds from England increased another out-station would be opened, and a paid preacher placed in it. Clark arranged with the missionaries to travel through the district in order to survey the extent of the task, and for two solid months he tramped among villages and market-towns. At the end of these hard and trying journeys he sat down with the missionaries, who, with him, had caught a vision of the immensity of the task, and said: "I was in a big business and we opened branch after branch in various parts of the country, but if every new branch had been dependent upon our first shop we should soon have been in the bankruptcy court."

Together they then studied the principles embodied in Roland Allen's *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* and decided to call in the Chinese preachers and form what were afterwards known as "Clark Bands" to engage in widespread evangelism, with a view to the promotion of indigenous Churches, which would be able to evangelize their own surrounding territory. Only thus can we hope to evangelize the world. This model in miniature of world-evangelization, of reaching every creature, has had a widespread influence. T. C.

HEALING IN ISRAEL

The Bible contains many instances of the beneficent effect of healing springs in Palestine; some of these springs still exist and are in use to-day. They are capable of being developed and put to more effective use by modern methods. The hot springs of Tiberias are being developed in this way at Poreyah near Tiberias on the south-western shore of Lake Kinnereth. The project is being paid for by American and Israeli physicians in co-operation with local companies. A large sanatorium, a convalescent home and a tourist centre have been planned at a cost of nearly one million pounds sterling. The most up-to-date medical methods will be used to promote the efficacy of these ancient waters of healing.

¶ *Japan makes the most of her limited resources*

Development in Japan

Floyd Shacklock

SIX years after the war the word which best describes Japan is *development*. This applies to every area of life—physical, economic, political, and certainly religious.

The rubble has been cleared from the streets. New, simple dwellings are rising on the old foundations. In the heart of Tokyo, as in other cities, ferro-concrete office buildings newly completed or under construction bespeak an active commerce. Even two years ago, one saw wheat planted in dooryards of the capital or between the pavement and the sidewalk. That has been changed by several years of bountiful crops which have brought Japan far on the road toward a normal diet. Large factories are being rebuilt slowly, but small manufacturing units and home industries are filling the stores with consumer goods—clothing, household articles, books, cosmetics, toys, or tools. Employment is plentiful. Domestic transportation is at pre-war levels. Life still is grim for many millions of Japanese, but in comparison with five or six years ago, or in comparison with most of Asia, existence is not intolerable. Japan is making the most of her limited resources with an indomitable spirit. One should not suggest that her economy is without serious problems, but the development is phenomenal.

In politics, the early inertia and acquiescence has been replaced by party government which under the controls of the Occupation is restive to be independent. As I write, the Press is filled with articles anticipating the signing of the peace treaty* and the restoration of full freedom. In many ways there will be a new Japan. For example, Japanese expect the removal of restraints which limit free speech and free Press. Until now, no criticism of the Occupation has been permitted. The Japanese Government may impose its own controls of one type or another, but Japan will probably know freedom of expression such as she has never had in all the centuries.

It is to be expected that a first expression of such freedom will be a reaction against the authorities of the past few years. Complaint is always easy, and no Government can escape all criticism, much less that of a foreign Occupation. For a time there may be criticism of the Occupation, of democratic powers of the West or of the world in general, but the situation will be far more wholesome for the development of responsible government and society.

Just as the Christian movement six years ago also bore grievous scars of the war, so it too has made commendable progress. Many congregations had been scattered as the fury of war mounted. New groups, often in new locations, are springing up to bear witness to the power of the Gospel and the devotion of surviving pastors and members. Over one half of the five hundred churches destroyed by

*The treaty was signed on 8 September.—Ed.

bombings and fires have been replaced. Aid from abroad has also assisted in the reconstruction of many mission school buildings.

The more significant growth has been within the inner life of the Church. Before the war, Christians were on the defensive and often were unable to overcome a sense of inferiority of numbers in a non-Christian society. Christianity is still a pathetically tiny minority movement, but Christians are coming to feel more sure of themselves as a recognized group in the social scene. The Church, which during the war yielded to some of the pressures of hostile government and public opinion, is regaining its sense of autonomy. Regional and national meetings of the United Church and of the denominations make their plans for evangelism, for the training of theological candidates, for youth work, and the rest, with a new sense of confidence and of mission.

NEARLY all of the Japanese Christian groups are represented in the National Christian Council. In the last two years it has been greatly strengthened and encouraged to extend its leadership in co-operative planning for evangelism. Of the Council's activities, two in particular have undertaken extensive programmes generously aided by mission funds from abroad. The Commission of Audio-Visual Aids is promoting the use of moving and still pictures. It has produced some gramophone records of hymns. It broadcasts Christian services each Sunday morning and is making ambitious plans for radio ministry.

The Literature Commission is stimulating the preparation and publication of Christian literature of all types, ranging from Bible dictionaries and commentaries, theological and devotional books to magazines, Bible story-books for children, and picture-books for the very young. A large Bible dictionary, although it is expensive because of its size (1,500 pages), has sold rapidly, and a new edition is now required after five months.

Special evangelistic literature is distributed to the hospitals and to invalids, and a Christian magazine for blind children has been started. Two popular magazines for young people are meeting with encouraging response. *Rural Village* is a magazine for farm youth, and *New Age* is a youth and family journal. Both are edited for the purpose of attracting new inquirers and should be followed by other evangelistic literature. These are on sale in non-Christian book stores, and the *Rural Village* has even been placed on the news stands of the Government railways. Translations of Christian books from the West as well as original Japanese manuscripts are crowding the presses.

An inexpensive pocket song-book, *One Hundred Favourite Hymns*, became a best seller, with 30,000 copies sold in five months. The Protestant union hymnal reports sales of 76,000 in the last six months. The Japan Bible Society, aided by the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible Society, in 1948 undertook the distribution of ten million copies of Scriptures or portions in three years. Approximately two million were distributed in 1949, three million in 1950, and close to two million in the first half of 1951. The Literature Commission does not attempt to publish books directly but is attempting to strengthen the Christian publishing

firms. In symbolic language, the Commission outlines its purpose as the planting of trees which will grow in their own strength.

Aid from the older Churches has taken several forms, including funds, visiting specialists, and an increasing number of missionaries. Financial help has been generous, even though not sufficient to repay adequately the physical damage of bombings upon churches and parsonages, mission schools, and missionary residences.

There has been a stream of visiting speakers and specialists from abroad to aid and stimulate the Churches. These included many eminent lecturers and three visitors who led evangelistic campaigns for decisions. Dr. E. Stanley Jones had three busy and rewarding months of preaching. Dr. Harold McConnell, of New York, carried on demonstration centres for visitation evangelism in six or seven cities. A former military chaplain, the Rev. Lawrence L. LeCour, returned a year ago with his wife and two other musicians to tour the whole of Japan in their specially equipped automobile and trailer, carrying a harp and other musical instruments. Their musical-evangelistic programmes were immensely popular and effective. Large numbers of inquirers were put in touch with local pastors.

Gradually missionary forces are approaching the pre-war totals, though with a startling increase in the numbers of independent missionaries or those not related to the Japanese Churches. Missionaries now represent at least seventy-three denominations and sects. Conspicuous in missionary arrivals have been the group of young people as contract English teachers for mission schools. They were dubbed "J-3's" (Japan for three years). Fifty-two came in 1948, largely supported by the American Methodist Church, and thirty-five in 1950. These two groups had been given training and orientation in a special summer school in the United States before sailing. In addition to these two groups, other short-term teachers have arrived each year, as well as larger numbers of missionaries under regular appointment. In the recent annual meeting of the Fellowship of Christian Missionaries, it was apparent that post-war missionaries will soon outnumber those with pre-war experience.

BUT though one may properly write of the development of the Christian movement in Japan, it is impossible to forget the limited human resources of the Church at large and the baffling problems confronting individual Churches. Protestant church members do not yet total one-half of one per cent. of the population. Many pastors are on tragically inadequate stipends. Some do not seem to come to grips with life's problems at the every-day level.

A recent survey of representative churches showed that fifty-two per cent. of the members have joined the Church since the war, and fifty-one per cent. of the members are under thirty years of age. To all of the problems of the Church in a non-Christian society are added these problems of an inadequately trained membership and too few lay leaders.

Christian preaching in Japan has for many decades been largely directed toward the students and intelligentsia, and the Church does not yet represent a true cross-

section of society. Much is said about rural evangelism and the approach to labouring people. However, almost nothing is being done for the latter, and scarcely more than a token beginning on rural work. Christians join the Church as individuals, not as families. There is great need for an emphasis upon Christian homes. Christian education is recognized by the church leaders as a major need. This includes both the preparation and publishing of Christian education materials and the recruiting and training of teachers for the church schools.

Much has been said abroad in recent years of the spiritual vacuum which political defeat and the devastation of the war brought to Japan. It has been widely reported that ancient Buddhism has lost its hold upon the people. And when Shinto placed its reliance upon military power, defeat meant its doom. It was argued that the old foundations were destroyed, and the Japanese people were without any faith. The Christian Churches were urged to fill a spiritual vacuum. This phrase represented a certain insight, but it has been badly overworked.

The time has come to change the figure of speech. Just as nature abhors a vacuum, so Japan has not remained spiritually empty. It is now more accurate to say that Japan is the battle ground of fiercely competing ideologies and ways of life. Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa, in addressing a missionary group recently, stressed five great enemies of Christianity. He included Communism, Fascism, Buddhism (particularly the aggressive Nichiren sect) and resurgent Shinto. The fifth enemy on his list was moral decadence, illustrated by floods of salacious literature, the rising incidence of venereal disease, the loose relations between foreign soldiers and Japanese girls, a nihilist philosophy which has overwhelmed many students of the war and immediate post-war period, and the prevalence of suicide.

Japanese Communism is hostile to all religion. It has not made the advance which might easily have been expected. The drastic land reforms of the Occupation took the greatest propaganda weapon out of the Communists' hands. The number of Communists in parliament and other elected public offices has decreased. It was reported in the Press that in the spring elections of 1951, among some 9,000 city, town, and village councillors, no Communists were elected. This, if accurate, is astonishing. Yet it would be folly to assume that Communism, which thrives upon discontent, is no threat in Japan. It has caught the allegiance of large numbers of students and labourers. It is going underground, where it is the more elusive and dangerous.

FASCISM is a more imminent danger, and it is commonly predicted that the first trends of an independent Japan after the treaty will be to the Right and not to the Left. The military and public officials who were purged from public life are now being freed from their disabilities, and they are returning to politics and business. Some of them are doubtless reformed. But on the other hand, the nationalistic worship of the State was too deeply imbedded in Japanese consciousness to be completely removed in any half-dozen years of an Occupation which promoted democratic ideals. The test

of democracy is still to come in Japan.

Of the revival of Buddhism and Shinto, there can be no doubt. Attendance at temples and shrines, which fell off almost completely after the surrender, is increasing rapidly. State Shinto lost its revenues from the public treasury and much prestige, but there has been a great increase in the popular, superstitious, eclectic Shinto sects. Many of them are superficial and will not continue long, but several of the sectarian Shinto groups are growing rapidly.

Dr. Kagawa's fifth point, that of moral decay, is indeed a serious problem for Japan. The love of pleasure of many millions can be matched for others by the love of power or the worship of things. Japan has taken many technological gifts from the West, but these seem to elevate "things" to the altar of men's hearts.

There is, then, no spiritual vacuum, but rather a battle for the soul of Japan. The lines are formed for conflict and the sense of urgency before the Christian Church is greater than ever before.

Christianity will not win Japan because people have no other choice, or because it is their last choice. Even in the years described as a spiritual vacuum, there was no great turning to the Churches, no mass movement. Christianity, if it wins Japan, will have to succeed because it is men's first choice among many competing faiths. The Church is called to demonstrate the life it promises to men through Christ, so that men may see that life and choose it above other ways and ideologies.

THE opportunity is real, for Japan is ready to consider new ways, even radically new solutions to the problems of life. Japan stands at one of those uncommon points in history when everything is being questioned. But the great point is that Christianity is not ignored. It is being questioned. Out of uncertainty and conflict, people will choose new loyalties.

Long ago "the common people heard him gladly" (Mark 12:37). The common people of Japan today are ready to hear the Gospel of Jesus. There is great competition. There are other voices calling. Herein lies the great urgency of the Christian mission in Japan.

BOLIVIA—PROGRESS AND PERSECUTION

Persecution of Protestant Christians (and others) has broken out in more than one South American State in recent years. In Bolivia three years ago some nine people, including one Canadian Missionary, were done to death at an open-air meeting. This hostility to evangelical work continues, yet the Bolivian Indian Mission reports a time of unparalleled opportunity, with Indians tramping several days' journey to seek the light of the Gospel. Inflation tends to restrict missionary activity, but the practice of indigenous principles makes it possible in some measure to meet the difficulties of rising costs and the possibility of the withdrawal of missionaries.

In Malaya To-day

Hobart B. Amstutz

THE emergency situation in Malaya is now just over three years old. Many lives have been lost, much property destroyed by arson and other means, but Malaya carries on.

As part of the effort to stamp out banditry a tremendous resettlement scheme is rapidly being concluded under the direction of the Government of the Federation. Half a million people, commonly known as squatters, most of them Chinese, are being removed, some as many as 200 miles, to resettlement camps. When completed, there will be 324 such camps or new towns in various parts of Malaya. This vast project is being carried out in order to cut off sources of supplies to the bandits in this country. It also forms a vast new citizenship project.

The people involved in this great project have for the most part been living in isolated areas far from towns and settlements, and almost completely cut off from police protection and other civil opportunities. Many of them have been in the country since birth, but, due to economic circumstances, have been forced to fend for themselves and make a living from gardening outside of the usual occupied areas in the country; others among the squatters are illegal immigrants into the country who have come in over the border from Siam or along the coast; others are people who came in during the Japanese régime or escaped from the Japanese and hid themselves in jungle areas. Few of these people have been able to give their children an education, nor have they thought of themselves as citizens of the country.

This vast project is being carrie through in order to make it impos sible for the bandits, who hide i the jungles, to get food and medica supplies and other necessities c life. As long as people lived i these isolated areas they were a easy prey of the bandits, an willingly, or often under threat an coercion, became part of the liaisc between them and the source c supplies in the towns. Now eac family is given a plot of lan materials for a house, and comple protection in these resettlemen areas. These new towns are we laid out, sanitation and othe amenities are carefully provide and the removal of fear and appr hension soon makes the inhabitan into new persons. When they a first brought into the camp they a full of fear. As soon as they reali that the propaganda told them b the Communists is untrue, and th these areas are not concentratic camps, they rapidly become happ members of the new communit For the first time in their lives the children may get an education, a also for the first time do they ha religious opportunities.

These resettlement camps are t greatest evangelistic opening th the Malayan Church has ever ha and certainly it is our duty a privilege now to demonstrate these people what Christianity a its child democracy mean and off The Government has made a nu ber of overtures to the Christi Churches in this country, aski them to come into the resettleme camps and offering them the actu materials and even monetary ass tance to build chapels and scho

Government is also willing to pay the salaries of missionaries and other workers whom the Churches might wish to send. The buildings and land will become the property of the Church body which inaugurates the individual project, and that denomination will have the right to continue the work in whatever way it desires. We doubt if any Church will accept the actual salaries for missionaries who may be assigned to these areas, for that would give the Communists just another opportunity to accuse us of being the tools of capitalism; but we see no reason why Government should not help with the building of schools and pay the salaries of school teachers.

The air services have almost completely taken over the long-distance passenger transportation previously offered by the Malayan Railways. The main highways are full of lorries, passenger cars, and 'buses, which travel safely under military patrol protection. The bandits have badly sabotaged the transportation of commodities in Malaya. In normal times the Malayan Railways handled most of the heavy freight, but during the last year a great deal of this has had to be hauled by lorry, due to the inability of the railways to deliver goods on time, in particular rubber shipments to the various ports. This has very badly affected the ferry service on the two rivers between Malacca and Singapore, so that passenger cars have often been held up for hours waiting for the commercial lorries to pass. Economically, the emergency has, of course, retarded the progress of the country by using up funds which would otherwise have gone to roads, schools, libraries and other public needs.

Happily, the emergency has not stopped the Christian advance. Christian ministers, Asian and missionary, continue to serve throughout the country, even in isolated and dangerous areas. Strange as it may seem, the emergency has even served the cause of the Christian Church. If we can adequately meet the challenge and opportunity offered in the great resettlement camps, then the cause of Christ will be immeasurably advanced in Malaya.

THE Malayan Christian Council has been very conscious of the threat of Communism, and sent ten delegates to the Conference on Christianity and Communism, which was held at Bangkok last January, under the leadership of Professor John Bennett. The Malayan delegation was outstanding not only in its coverage and reports on the Malayan picture, but also in its contribution to the entire conference. It was very interesting to note how certain Asian leaders at the Conference took a very active and fearless part, and, of course, presented the most factual and truthful pictures of the actual situation in their own countries, while others, no doubt, fearful of consequences later, either minimized the danger of Communism in their own country or refused to say even a word about it. Some of the members of the Malayan delegation have been active since their return in the production of literature against Communism, pointing out the fallacies in Communistic propaganda, and, in particular, the complete anti-religious programme of dialectical materialism. The writer has been surprised to find, in discussion with Chinese ministers both in Malaya and Sarawak, Borneo;

that some of them are utterly indifferent to the threat; they simply say, "It does not matter very much who is in charge of the government, we will carry on our church work as usual." These men are completely blind to the actual facts of the situation appertaining in China, for example.

THE ecumenical movement, which has slowly been gaining ground in Malaya, sees in Trinity College its most striking symbol of advance and unity. This interdenominational college and training school, begun in October, 1948, and supported by the American Methodist Church, the Church of England, and the English Presbyterian Church, graduated its first class in June of this year. It has successfully weathered the first three years of its existence, and is now firmly established in the life of the Malayan Protestant Church.

China's tragedy and loss has become our opportunity, with the result that various foundations and missionary societies in Great Britain and the United States are now looking toward Malaya as the one place in south-east Asia where overseas Chinese, in particular, may be served outside of China. These various foundations and societies are offering faculty and financial assistance to Trinity College, as well as to the already long established missions of the Anglican, the English Presbyterian, and the Methodist Churches. Already missionaries from China have been sent to Malaya to help in the resettlement areas, and others have taken important places on the staffs of the various denominations.

New work has been going ahead not only in the above-mentioned resettlement areas, but also in outlying non-evangelistic areas in Malaya, and, in particular, among the Iban (Sea Dyak) people of Sarawak. The Church of England for many years has been working among the Iban people in the First and Second Districts of Sarawak with Kuching as their headquarters. Since 1939 the Methodist Church which has now been working for fifty years in the Rejang River Valley of Borneo among the Chinese people, began its work among the Dyak people in the Upper Rejang River District in and beyond Kapit. This work was interrupted during the war years and was begun again under strong leadership in 1948, and the Methodists now have two schools, a church, and nearly 200 converts.

The tragedy in China has also given rise to new problems which the Malayan Christian Council is increasingly having to face. The first came two years ago at the time of the Eastern Asia Christian Conference held in December, 1949, at Bangkok, when the promoters of the International Council of Christian Churches (I.C.C.C.) under the leadership of Dr. Carl McIntire, did their best to sabotage that conference. This group since then has consistently tried to sabotage the work of the Christian Protestant community in Malaya, especially among the Presbyterian churches in Singapore, and there is a possibility that they may establish a Bible school here. The situation in China also means that individual evangelists and members of small sects are now coming to Malaya, in particular to Singapore, making the Protestant situation ever more and more involved. Large sums of money seem to be available to the representatives of

these sects, and they are making every effort to bring a divisive spirit into the Malayan Protestant Church. Their motives are, of course, sincere, and each one believes that he has the "one Gospel" for this country. The Seventh-Day Adventists, who for many years have had their Asian headquarters here as well as a training school, a day school, and a tiny congregation, have recently been spending thousands of dollars in public meetings, in order to gain more adherents. Their funds permit them to issue a tremendous amount of literature which finds its way, as a rule, not into the hands of non-Christians, but those who are already Christian, and which, to the untrained and theologically ignorant Christian, is most disturbing. They have established a very fine hospital, which is run by two excellent doctors whose beautiful Christian spirit, friendliness and helpfulness cannot be overstated. We would all be happy if this particular group would use its energy for the evangelization of non-Christians rather than become a divisive force among those who are already Christian.

As has been true in all parts of Asia for many years, the Christians, even though they are but a minority of the entire population, represent a powerful force in the civil and community life of the peoples in Malaya. The Christian schools have always been on the foreground of education, and in moral leadership, and most non-Christian groups support these schools. There has been no difficulty whatsoever in the propagation of the Christian Gospel except among the Sakais, or the aborigines, of Malaya. The Malays of the Federation, who are all Mohammedan, under the new constitution assert that these people are their obligation, and thus for the past three years the Methodist Church has not been able to continue its work among them. It is hoped that ways and means may be found to overcome these difficulties as well. Thus the total picture presented by the Malayan Christian Church is one of constant advance, one of more influence throughout the entire Malayan world, and one of great hope for the eventual building of the Kingdom of God in south-east Asia.

CHURCH PROGRESS IN THE PHILIPPINES

It is related that the Methodist Church in the Philippines at its 1951 Conference reported that during the previous year there had been more than 1,000 converts and Church membership had increased by 10 per cent. One hundred and twenty-five students were baptized in Silliman University in the same year. The Cosmopolitan Student Church in Manila reported an increase of 43 per cent. The Central Church in Manila has as one of its objectives for 1951-52 the winning of 500 members. Protestants now form 3 per cent. of the population of the Philippine Republic. Dr. Kagawa once asserted his conviction that a million Christians (out of a population of eighty millions) could exert a determining influence on the thought and life of Japan. If conditions are at all comparable, the Filipino Protestants now fulfil this initial condition.

God's Word to the Discerning

Harold F. Wickings

TO the untroubled mind God's word often speaks with little effect, whereas to men and women in difficult or dangerous conditions, or when conscious of inner desperate need, His word comes as challenge and uplift, and His activity in the present hour is once again discerned.

One recalls the varying response to the preaching of keen young Chinese of the Clark Preaching Band in Central China during the years before the Japanese invasion. Well-to-do shopkeepers in towns, around which local war and banditry merely eddied, were generally untouched unless conscious of moral difficulties, but in villages which were constantly upset by roving groups of bandits or Communists, people felt that they existed on the edge of life and they tended to listen more eagerly. Visits to mountain churches, where no missionary or Chinese pastor had been able to go for fifteen years, brought out the same truth. To one village church people came long distances through snow and storm, and four sons carried on a litter their bed-ridden mother in order to meet the missionary and Chinese leader and talk over the deep things of life. The communion service in that place was one of the most outstanding that I have ever experienced. Sentries were on watch at the village defences, and a fierce wind caused drifts of snow to pile up within crannies and doors of the poorly-constructed church building. The normal eucharistic elements were lacking and we made shift with broken biscuit and cold tea, but the Presence was felt by us all.

During the Japanese invasion of China numerous men and women, hitherto only slightly touched by Christianity, became more keen on Bible study. Some Chinese Christians began to discern in their own situation a close parallel to that of Jewish Christians during the Roman occupation of Palestine, which, they found, had produced a similar crop of quislings and collaborationists such as the Herods and Sadducees. At least one Chinese Christian thereupon felt a new challenge in the experiences of the Early Church and the Apostle Paul. He exclaimed, "It is as though Chinese Christianity were to produce someone who, within thirty years, would witness powerfully for Christ under the shadow of the Emperor's palace in Tokyo! We are not positive enough in our evangelistic outlook; we are thinking too much of keeping our own little causes going, and in that lies spiritual death."

The Pacific conflict, precipitated by the attack upon Pearl Harbour in December, 1941, resulted in several thousand Westerners entering Japanese internment camps in East and North China. At first such communities were not homogeneous, and business people and missionaries tended to keep apart from one another in life and thought, but gradually the barriers were dissolved and understanding grew up. The strain and uncertainties of those days produced a similar quest for God's truth among a good many—though by

no means all. Vague ideas from a Christian upbringing tended to come to the top and were sharpened in conversations. From talks in odd corners, or from questions asked while waiting (say) in a hot water queue or a bread queue, there grew up Bible discussion groups for youths and for men, for girls and for mature women, each with different approaches and problems. One person, who normally did not take much part in discussion, privately asked the question, "If God did things one time in bringing Israel out of bondage can He not do something for us nowadays? Does He only work on and off? Perhaps this is the approaching end of all things, and we can do nothing but await the world crash which will herald the Second Coming." Her last guess was one that is offered all too frequently by puzzled folk in difficult and dangerous times. It is the short cut to an over-simplified solution which tends to result in searching the thirteenth chapter of the Gospel according to Mark (and parallels) and the entire Book of Revelation in order to equate "signs of the times." In despair of seeing God at work around them such people give up history in favour of a bizarre and unhelpful eschatology which necessarily has to keep on altering and postponing the date of the End. Her first question was one that is more frequently asked in these days, and doubtless many people ask it of themselves without being vocal. She herself, in that internment camp, was surprised by an answer that pointed to many signs of God's activity in people's lives and in outer history too. Curiously enough, it was she who concluded the talk by quoting Longfellow's well-known lines:

> Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small,
> Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all.

THE Chinese Christian Church now finds itself more hardly beset than it did during the days of the Japanese occupation. Once again comes a keen searching of the Scriptures and a quest for signs of the hand of God. Early last year in one Chinese city, Christian leaders, both clerical and lay, voiced this need of careful Bible study and prayer. Not unnaturally, perhaps, they chose the Acts of the Apostles, because, they said, "We are a minority that does not appear to count. We are in a hostile environment and watched by authorities who are anything but Christian in outlook. If, in similar circumstances, the Early Christians achieved success through the power and leading of the Holy Spirit, we too can learn the secret." Those weekly gatherings were remarkable, not only because several men and women present had never before seen Luke's masterly presentation of the steps in early Christian progress, but for lively discussion and the free and uplifting prayers which invariably followed. They were realizing that they, too, were part of Christian history, and that God is not an absentee but is constantly working out His purpose.

Chinese Christians belong to what are reckoned the younger Churches, and because the story of the Early Church thus appeals to them, and because the New Testament, despite its difficulties, makes

thrilling and inspiring reading for them, they have not given close study to the Old Testament. That study will come in time, no doubt, with profitable results for God's Church in East Asia. In the West Christianity has been planted a much longer time, and to some extent our British civilization has been Christianized. The phrase "to some extent" is used advisedly, because all too frequently the sentence is heard, "Britain is supposed to be a Christian country!", sometimes uttered ironically and perhaps wistfully. That our civilization is far from being Christian many honest people freely admit, and yet Christianity is deep-rooted amongst us and many Christians progress beyond the Old Testament, even if they sometimes complain that a helpful "line" on which to read the Old Testament intelligently is not easily found. It may be presumed, therefore, that if in the West men and women are alarmed by the trend of world events, they will find God's word speaking to them from the Bible as a whole, and, because of parallels between our situation and those which sometimes confronted Israel and Judah, they may well find some vital message for them in the Old Testament.

It cannot be emphasized too often that the Old Testament prophets were not men who set out to foretell future events in detail. Rather did they brood long upon God's ways until God "took" them and showed them His will for His people; that is, they learned from God some of His eternal truths and laws which are operable in any age and civilization, and more particularly a civilization which reckons it knows God and is working under His providence. Often the prophets had scathing and unwelcome things to say concerning Israel's backslidings and her failure to keep the manward side of the Covenant. Had Israel not known God, nor made Covenant with Him, naturally God would not have been severe, but, urge the prophets, because Israel has been specially led and taught by Him then her responsibility is great. The best people in Israel and Judah reflected ruefully that their fathers and forefathers had always learned sense by reason of the woes which God sent upon the nation. Time and again the prophets pointed out that these troubles were only to be expected, and more were due to come because the people were failing to keep the Covenant. In modern language some might put it less bluntly than did the prophets by saying that Nemesis overtook Israel for her moral backsliding, but, after all, the prophetic word is the right one because these men saw God controlling the outer world of events as well as working His will through the "remnant" of loyal folk who tried sincerely to keep the Covenant.

THE West is now alarmed to find itself confronted by the growing strength of Communism throughout the world, and, forgetful that such ideologies cannot be dealt with adequately by military might, proceeds, in the manner of "the princes" and "chief officers" and "the captains of the forces" who derided Isaiah and Jeremiah, to arm itself and build up alliances. This evades the issue and merely postpones a greater cataclysm. What have the prophets to tell us of God's ageless truth on this kind of problem? At once there come

to mind those chapters which deal with Assyria. How did Isaiah regard that terrifying menace of heathenism which hung over Palestine for so long? The following verses give the core of his viewpoint:—

Isaiah
5:25a The anger of the Lord is kindled towards his people, and his arm is stretched out
26 against them. He signals to a nation afar off, whistling to them from the ends of the
27 earth. And lo! swiftly, speedily they come; none tired or stumbling, not a belt slack nor
28 a sandal-string loose; arrows sharpened, bows all bent, horses' hoofs hard like flint,
29 chariot wheels whirling! They roar like a lioness, they growl like young lions gripping their prey, carrying it off with none to rescue.
10:5 O Assyria, rod of my anger and staff of my wrath! Against
6 an impious people I send him, a people with whom I am wrath, bidding him plunder and spoil, trampling them down
7 like mud in the streets. But Assyria has other plans and aims, scheming to exterminate the nations far and wide,
8 reckoning his generals to be as good as kings.
15 Shall the axe boast over the woodman, or the saw lord itself over him that plies it? As though a club were to sway the man that wields it, or a staff to brandish a man!
16 Therefore the Lord of Hosts shall send a wasting disease upon his flourishing frame, and under his reputation shall be kindled a burning glowing like flame. It shall consume him soul and body till he wastes away like
24 a man diseased. Therefore, thus saith the God of Hosts, O my people who dwell in Zion, be not afraid of Assyria when he strikes you with his rod and lifts up his staff against you as did Egypt
25 long ago. For soon my anger shall cease and my wrath shall
26 come to an end. Then shall the Lord of Hosts brandish over him the scourge with which he smote Midian at Ravensrock, and the rod which he raised against Egypt
27 over the sea. Then shall Assyria's burden slip from your shoulder and his yoke be removed from your neck.

This is fairly clear; however much the folk in Jerusalem might fear the might of heathen Assyria let them understand that it is God using a "rod" to chastise His people. They must take a long view of the "yoke" and accept it with repentance and renewed determination to be worthy people. Let them not worry overmuch concerning Assyria's cocky attitude to the world, for in God's own time the "rod" shall be snapped and thrown away. Some moderns prefer to put it another way by saying that any kind of materialism contains within itself the seeds of its own ultimate destruction and dissolution. Nevertheless the prophetic word is again the right one. To talk of materialism ultimately destroying itself carries no word of God's judgment and chastisement nor hope of man's repentance.

When shall we see that the rise of materialism is a judgment upon our own civilization? Are the people of the West so complacent that they are unaware of the rottenness in their own structure of civilization? To someone returning to Britain every so often from service overseas the moral and spiritual sag in the nation's life

becomes more obvious each time, yet people both in and out of the Churches appear to be depending all too much on the traditions and the moral and spiritual capital built up by their forefathers, forgetting that each generation needs to seek God afresh and that there can be no proxies for one's own soul. Before God's purity we are all clad in dirty rags and tatters, and the best of our civilization is a poor thing. If it were truly Christian neither Communism nor any other form of materialism could obtain a foothold. How then do we view the "rod" of judgment or the Hand that wields it? Is the view of "the princes" and "chief officers" to prevail until eventually they are discredited in bloodshed and shame, as in the days of the prophets, or shall we adopt the prophetic standpoint and see Almighty God working out His purpose? The issue is a challenge to repentance in the churches, and to national repentance too, and then to a reaffirmation of our allegiance to the New Covenant, which was ratified in the poured-out Life on Calvary.

¶ *A Bird's-eye View*

The Near and Middle East

THE great belt of territory from North Africa across to Persia has seen in its time some of the greatest achievements of the Christian Church as well as its almost complete disappearance in some areas; it is the area of the rise of Islam and of its most enduring conquests. Within recent years it has undergone great political and economic changes, but Islam remains its great bond, though it has to adjust itself to the rising and violent nationalisms which tend to divide it. The prestige of the West has suffered a rapid decline, while the emergence of Israel as a state and the steady infiltration of Soviet Communism present factors whose significance for change are incalculable. The whole area has been reckoned one of the most difficult fields for Christian evangelism, and it cannot be said that recent events have made the evangelistic task of the Churches any easier or its necessity any less urgent.

Its focal point is still Palestine which remains the Holy Land for Christian, Jew and Moslem alike. But Palestine is now divided between the State of Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan. With the developing stability of Israel Christian missions and Churches have been allowed to resume some of their former activities. The Government of Israel has been anxious to reassure the outside world that there is freedom of religion in the new state, but Hebrew Christians do not share this view. Christians may broadcast in Hebrew with one limitation —they may not pray in Hebrew. There have been reports of strange Messianic groups among the Jews who would claim some sort of Christian affiliation. Missions and Churches are at work again against a very different background, in places where our Lord once walked and talked and wrought miracles.

The establishment of Israel has taken place with the accompaniment of a new mass of misery, the Arab refugees who number over 800,000. A conference was held in

Beirut in May of this year with the aim of understanding and surveying the situation on the spot, of focussing Christian attention on the human problems involved and of drawing the attention of governments to the part which they must play if this great festering sore (with its danger to peace and stability) is to be healed. If the conference did little else except call attention to the need and publish it to the Churches of the world, it achieved something. It did however something more: it brought together missions and Churches, including the official representatives of the ancient Churches of the area, in a way which has not been done before.

The Holy City itself remains divided but Christian work and worship have been continued and new workers have been arriving and they find the means at times of crossing some of the most intractable boundary lines in the world. Christian work has also gone on in the Kingdom of Jordan which has suffered such a grievous threat to its stability through the assassination of its King.

The centre of Arab resistance to Israel is said to be in Egypt which is inflamed with strong anti-foreign nationalism. The resurgence of political Islam takes, among other forms, the direction of restricting still further the activities of Christian schools and the entry of Christian missionaries. Economic pressure is used increasingly against Christians in government service and in commercial employ. There is still a steady drain of Christians to Islam. Yet the work of missions in schools and hospitals, through literature and personal contact, goes on. There are signs of new life in the ancient Coptic Church and the grave emergencies of the last few years have served to bring the leaders of all the Churches together, for very limited co-operation.

In the avowedly secular state of Turkey there are signs of a revival of Islam which may be a resistance to Communist infiltration and threats. It is not easy to maintain any real church-life among those who claim (by descent or otherwise) to be Christians. Christian work is on a different footing in Syria, while Lebanon has a precarious Christian majority. All Churches in Syria have received support in the past from one or other of the great powers, but they must now stand by themselves and understand each other better if they are to survive and witness in this new situation.

Along the coast of North Africa various missions, mostly small, pursue their daily work of witness with here an inquirer and there a convert, with tiny churches. Here again anti-foreign nationalism is growing, as well as inflation to add to the hardness of a task whose success must be measured in units, if at all. But the witness is there.

Oil dominates the fortunes of Arabia, Irak and Persia at the moment, for good and ill. It has brought great wealth and the possibility of even more to countries which were and are poor. It has made possible social services such as medical attention in Arabia where there was none before, or only such as missions supplied. Even so missions can offer what others do not—the healing touch of Christ. Thousands of Europeans have entered the area and their witness, or lack of it, to Christianity may well be more decisive than the work of missionaries. E. J. B.

Evangelism in a Renascent India:

THE CHALLENGE OF HINDUISM

P. D. Devanandan

WHAT is significant of this post-freedom age in India is the imperative demand of the progressive type of liberal leaders who rightly insist that India rapidly modernize her pattern of life and modes of thought, though it is not always clear to us exactly wherein lies the difference between "modernizing" and "westernizing." It is not infrequently stated that what is considered modern "in scientific, cultural or other matters" is no longer solely western. A century ago, in the days of Ram Mohan Roy, what was "modern" was indeed "western," it was so perhaps, even as late as the early twenties of this century in India when Gandhi first began to preach *khaddi* and prohibition. But today it certainly is not true, in Indian thinking, that what is modern is necessarily western; to be modern is to keep abreast of times, "putting ourselves in the vanguard of progress." Therefore, the bogy of slavish imitation of the West no longer worries us.

Nevertheless, the conservative outlook persists. The older generation of national leaders do not look with favour on this tendency to adopt the modern temper and attitude. Their innate conservatism revolts against this keeping pace with the times. The old is good enough; in fact, in many ways it is better; so the older intellectual argues. But the real inertia to progress is to be found not among the orthodox so much as in the village population which constitutes the vast majority in the land. An observant missionary bishop who has lived for some years in the Districts has rightly remarked that "in these villages there is still a pattern of life not destroyed by the ferment of western civilization. One can say that these villages belong to pre-history rather than to history. Or perhaps one should say that they are just emerging into history. It is true that they are touched at many points by the modern world-civilization. But their fundamental social pattern is still the ancient one, and even if western civilization were to be blotted out by atomic warfare, I suppose that life here would not be profoundly changed."* It is significant that the Bishop equates "western civilization" with "modern world-civilization."

Mahatma Gandhi realized that real India was in the villages, and in marshalling the forces of opposition against the British *raj*, he picked his leaders from the intellectuals of the city but he recruited his army from the villagers. That was where, he knew, he had absolute devotion which almost amounted to reverent worship. But Gandhi did not want to tamper with the "fundamental social pattern" of village life: in fact, he idealized it. With the age of freedom and the new chapter in our national history, however, to "put ourselves in the vanguard of progress" the new outlook of the

* Lesslie Newbigin, "A South India Diary," S.C.M., 1951, p. 44.

scientific temper will have to penetrate the fastness of the rural mind which indeed is the "bullock-cart mind." There is the real battlefield. If we lose there, all may be lost. For unless the millions in the villages are also infected with the same enthusiasm for the new and the modern as the Indian intellectuals living in towns and cities we shall make little headway as a people in the modern world. The challenge of this situation in India is not fully realized by our national leaders. In fact the growing dissatisfaction with the present Congress régime is due to its almost total neglect of the villager. "Modernizing" the village by carrying into it all the amenities of the new world with easier facilities for communication, access to electric power, provision for adequate schooling, health and sanitation safeguards, is the one way of meeting the situation.

At the same time, India does not want to lose continuity with the past. The roots of her renascent culture should still be nourished in the original soil of her age-long past. On this there is little division of opinion. Both the progressive modern and the conservative orthodox are agreed that we should not cut away from the cultural heritage that is ours, or otherwise we will lose our distinctiveness as a people, and become cheap imitators. This is undoubtedly a laudable ambition, but it sets us a task which bristles with difficulties at every turn. In the first place, what exactly are those "roots" of our culture? Very little investigation has been done in this matter, and everything points to the possibility of considerable controversy emerging out of such an inquiry, and we may not finally agree on what cultural heritage we can accept as a common possession. Secondly, how successful would we be in reconciling the "old" which we want to retain with the "new" which we desire to appropriate? It may be that after all we do not have to effect such a synthesis: the "old" and the "new" can, perhaps, be both entertained as two unrelated entities. In the third place, is it not true that when we in India talk about our culture, we are really referring to our ancient religious heritage; and when we talk about our desire to be in the vanguard of progress we are thinking of the achievements of science and technology, of governmental patterns and economic security? Our culture is rooted in a characteristic religious outlook which is "other-worldly" and "spiritual," concerned with the culture of the spirit, and the "fruits" which we look for are obviously this-worldly and materialistic, relating to the welfare of man in society.

I

UNDOUBTEDLY when we talk about the "roots" of our culture in India to-day our minds go back to the heritage of Hinduism. It is not surprising, therefore, that although there is so much talk about a "secular state," there is a revived consciousness of renewed loyalty to Hinduism, if not as a body of religious beliefs and practices, at least as a philosophy of life, or more often as a culture. This religious philosophy (using that term in a larger sense as meaning "outlook") is based on four affirmations of faith which are generally accepted by the unlettered peasant as well as the

cultured intellectual. One is that Ultimate Reality is essentially unknowable. This religious agnosticism is in fact formulated in various ways, but in every case it also affirms the undeniable *fact* of Ultimate Reality, which in some way is also regarded as one's own *real* self. We may, however, know God but partially; never as He is. The "lower" forms of Hinduism hold that we experience Him in many "manifestations," all of which are partially true, but none wholly true. The Hindu is not a polytheist who worships many gods: he is a theist who worships God as many. To that extent he is not a monotheist. At the same time, it is difficult to deny that he is a polytheist, because he admits the worship-value of all these many gods.

THE second basic affirmation is that no one theological formulation about the nature of Ultimate Reality can claim absolute validity. All religions are equally true (and equally false); the exclusive claims of any one religion cannot be regarded as valid. Hinduism, therefore, permits no creed which states in an uncompromising formula: "this accept, if you want to be a Hindu." On the contrary it says with easy tolerance: "Believe what you think you should about Ultimate Reality." As many people, so many interpretations of God. None of them is wholly true. Therefore, any change-over from one faith to another is not necessary: it may be effected if a person feels that by so doing he gains a better understanding of God and Reality. But if any one does so in the belief that by so doing he claims to know all of God, then he is not only deluded, but he should be regarded as a renegade: he is questioning one of the fundamental affirmations of Hinduism, that God is essentially unknowable. Hence the Hindu opposition to "conversion" to Christianity and Islam.

The third basic affirmation of Hinduism is that, since all religions are only partially true, it is possible that if one accepts many different interpretations of God and Reality, believing in the essential truths for which they separately stand, the sum-total of partial truths will certainly be more than the partial truth affirmed by any one religion. The non-Hindu cannot quite understand this tendency to what he calls "syncretism." But to the Hindu such selective grouping of religious fundamentals is valid, since by such a process one stands to gain by the collective religious experience of many saints of God. Further, such syncretism logically follows on the basic affirmations already mentioned.

Fourthly, Hinduism recognizes the right of every Hindu to accept and practise whatever way of life he may find useful to his way of thinking and his peculiar social circumstances. This strange blend of a religious pragmatism and a religious individualism, which leaves the individual comparatively free to find his own value for life and thought in the religions of the world, enforces one limitation. A man is free to say, "This I believe and this I don't"; but if he were to say, "What I believe is *wholly* true, and what I do not believe is *totally* false," then his religious outlook is un-Hindu. He forthwith ceases to be a Hindu. He cannot be called a Hindu; he is a renegade. That is why Hinduism can tolerate any number of sects, accept even people

who choose to say, "We believe nothing at all," or even religious groups like the Kabir-panthis and the Sikhs (to some extent); but it cannot reconcile itself to either Christianity or Islam.

II

Signs are already evident in modern India that a renascent Hinduism will stress exactly these four basic affirmations. Certain corollaries follow, which have very important bearings on modern Indian life and thought, as giving rise to certain new trends. One of them is that religion is a matter which concerns the realm of the spirit and is of no direct concern with the world of matter.

THE Ultimately Real is, of course, of the spirit. But the material world is not unreal. We can, therefore, make the most of life in this world. The modern Hindu would say that in fact we *ought* to, as much as, if not more than, other people in the world. So that our acceptance of modern ideas need not invalidate our claim to be fundamentally a "spiritual people." Some modern Hindus adopt *all* the modern ways of a scientific and technological world, and prefer to remain totally agnostic about religion; others accept both science *and* religion, keeping them in two rigid compartments so that they can have the salutary conveniences of the one and the soporific comfort of the other; still others, by far the most, let themselves be swept along with the tide, the inevitable surge of modern life into the rural fastness of their simplicity, not deliberately adjusting themselves to these modern ways, but tacitly accepting them as things characteristic of an inevitable new age. They do not reject these good things of life; nor do they abandon their religious beliefs and practices. Pilgrimages can be made by aeroplane; village shrines can be visited in motor-cars; allopathic surgery can be supplemented by magical rites. And why not? The "spiritualism" of Hindu India is developing alongside of it a new "secularism." Secularism has been defined as the organization of life without reference to God. Hindu secularism may be that, but it does not deny the spiritually Real. It admits both, without seeing any necessity to relate the one to the other. These are two totally different realms; each is conditioned by a different body of laws; experience in the one is conditioned by sense-categories conditioned by space and time relations, whereas experience in the other is supra-sensual, beyond limitations of space and time, where the subject-object relationship (fundamental to empirical knowledge) does not hold true. New India, therefore, talks of the secular state, secular education, and secular progress according to secular standards of prosperity: all of which is not to deny but to affirm its ancestral faith in Hinduism.

How far this is true of the village population it is difficult to say. But the fact remains that, though little conscious thought is given to a deliberate assimilation of the new ways of life with the old pattern of village life, people are encouraged to change their ways without altering their outlook. The Hindu social reformer is not so much interested in discarding the old to make room for the new: he is anxious to add the new to the old. So to the good bishop, whose remarks were quoted earlier, it is

the obstinate persistence of the old that strikes him as strange, over against which the incoming of the new does not seem to stand out.

The second trend is with regard to the new standards of conduct, of social ethics. There is no doubt that in the renascent Hinduism of Free India certain new ideals of social relations will be increasingly recognized. The Freedom Movement in India not only stressed self-respect and other-respect; under Gandhi's leadership it gave prominence to non-violence (*ahimsa*), moral strength or soul-force (*satyagraha*), and social righteousness (*ramrajya*). Far-reaching social reforms were effected during the period of the struggle which shook the fabric of Hindu society to its foundations. The removal of "untouchability"; the recognition of the outcaste (*Harijan*) as members of the body politic; the acceptance of women as national leaders; the recognition of the value of voluntary service (*seva*) to fellow-men, especially to those who are socially oppressed; and the insistence on self-help and the dignity of labour by introducing hand-spinning (*khaddi*) as a condition of membership in the Congress corps of workers—all this gave a new direction to social thinking and the Hindu understanding of human values.

Political exigency might have furnished the immediate occasion for this new deviation from orthodoxy. None the less, the consequence has been a new "humanism" which has come to grip the mind of thinking people in India. This is undoubtedly a determinative factor in the thought of the Hindu intellectual: but to what extent it has influenced popular Hinduism, it is difficult to gauge. It certainly has not penetrated the stronghold of village Hinduism.

It is not likely that the new humanistic trend in Hindu life and thought will lead to a rejection of the doctrine that there is a spiritual element in man's composition which proves him distinct from every other form of natural existence and maintains that man can be wholly understood and explained naturistically. But the new trend is to reckon with man in the here and now and so to re-order life that individually and collectively man may be able to have the full life.

The third trend of development is not new by any means. Hindu thought down the centuries had always advanced by adopting as part of its own way of thinking whatever new ideas and practices contemporary life found acceptable. In this way, Hinduism has maintained a continuity: the new has been added to the old, both maintaining its separate individuality. To non-Hindu minds this tendency to what is described as "syncretism" has been always a source of constant puzzlement. But it is not realized that the underlying basis of this practice of accommodation is the fourfold principle which is fundamental to the Hindu religious outlook. That is why Hinduism has all along dscribed iself, as *at the same time* a system of knowledge of Reality (*Gnana Marga*); a body of ritualistic (*ethico-religious*) observances, ranging from primitive magical rites to strenuous exercises of self-discipline (*Karma Marga*); and a religion of personal devotion, involving a wide variety of ecstatic

practices of adoration of deities and of mystic experience of Reality (*Bhakti Marga*). It is not always understood that any form of Hinduism cannot be described as one or other of these *margas* alone, without its being at the same time something of the other *margas* as well. The reasonableness of Hindu "syncretism" can be appreciated only if the basic assumptions of the Hindu way of life can be accepted.

MOREOVER, when Hinduism does take over ideas and practices from other religions, it does so only on the tacit understanding that what is thus adopted is in accord with the basic assumptions of the Hindu faith, or can be so restated as to accord with them. Do the social and political ideals of modern world culture run counter to these assumptions? The modern Hindu answers "No." It may be that they were originally inspired by the Christian understanding of God's revelation and man's destiny, but that claim cannot now be established, and the thoughtful Hindu might well argue that even if these modern social and political ideals were originally Christian it makes no real difference: their value for the times is not thereby affected in any way. What is of primary consideration is the *usefulness* of these modern institutions such as democracy, the popular vote, the recognition of women and the like.

III

In the light of what has been said so far, what now is the task of the Christian evangelist? It seems clear that the call of evangelism is to go out into the villages which are still the stronghold of Hinduism. Village Hinduism is not touched by modern ideas, nor is it based on any systematic religious philosophy. Nevertheless the basic assumptions of the Hindu view of life are there, though not stated in philosophic terms. They find expression rather in religious practices which are characteristic of village Hinduism. Most of these still relate to caste-observances, temple and shrine worship, purification rituals and pilgrimages. No effort has been made by Hinduism to establish the ancestral faith of these village folk, much less to educate them in the meaning of religion. Nevertheless, if Christian forces in India were to make a determined effort to concentrate on village evangelism there would be opposition by Hindu intellectuals and national leaders, and perhaps the State might feel it necessary to interfere. But the challenge of Hindu India to the Christian evangelist is there in the villages. A new evangelistic strategy will have to be worked out with special reference to village Hinduism which will be uncompromisingly Christian and at the same time sympathetic in its approach to the simple mind.

Hindu secularism is an interesting development. It is an inevitable trend, noticeable especially in the city and town areas of Indian life. The new demands of modern life, which are based on industrial development and technical progress, have created conditions where economic factors control social ideals. Communism has undoubtedly influenced the thinking of a goodly number of labour leaders though it cannot be said that communistic ideology has become widespread. Nevertheless, it is making considerable progress

in that Communists are making a deliberate effort to capture the imagination of the peasant and the farm-worker in some parts of Travancore, Bengal and Andhradesh. The Communists do not make any attack on religion as such; they do not attribute social evil and economic injustice to religion. Their primary grievance is against a government which has played itself into the hands of wealthy landlords, powerful industrialists and bankers. Undoubtedly the communist propaganda is based on Marxian ideology, but at present they do not place so much emphasis on indoctrinating the peasant and the worker as on organizing them to resistance and action. It is a different matter, of course, with the communist intellectual. He is a thorough-going Marxian. The Hindu belief in the abiding nature of the Ultimately Real will not permit any denial of the validity of religion so that there is little danger of Communism succeeding in undermining the basic Hindu faith in spiritual values. The materialistic philosophy of Marxianism as such will not gain general acceptance; certainly not in the life and practice of Hindu people at large. The appeal of Communism to-day is really in the fight it is staging against an iniquitous landlordism and the power exercised in political life by the wealthy banking community.

THE task of Christian evangelism is to indicate unmistakably that the this-worldly concerns of life are governed by standards which are derived from the realm of the spirit. Fundamentally this involves a clear presentation of the Christian understanding of the nature of human life and its destiny. The opportunity is greatest where youths and the intellectual are concerned, and perhaps the best approach is through literature and study. But it is also essential that the Church itself take social action more seriously than hitherto. One of the primary tasks of Christian evangelism, in India as elsewhere in our modern world, is to make clear to the mind of thinking people that religion is relevant to life; that Christianity concerns this life as much as the life everlasting; that ours is a revolutionary faith which asks to realize even here on earth abiding standards of righteousness and justice because these are of the very nature of the eternal.

The strategy of the evangelist should always be to come to grips with the fundamentals of the Hindu faith; not merely to deal with these transient religious expressions of Hindu religious life and thought. The real task is in convincing the Hindu of the validity of the Christian claims about the Ultimately Real. Only then will he see the significance of "conversion" as against "proselytism," the incompatibility of "uniqueness" and "finality" with "tolerance" and "syncretism," and the cosmic purpose of evangelism as against the temporal good work of "Missions." We ourselves ought to be clear in our minds as to the fundamentals of our faith. More than our proclamation of the Gospel message, the effective thrust is in the demonstration of the Christian "outlook" as vividly contrasted with the Hindu "outlook"; in more than in mere words, however compelling, or even in deeds however appealing; it is lives that tell.

New Approaches to Missionary Service in India

Ernest Forrester-Paton

TO-DAY every country in the world is a mission field. In every part of the world Christians are in a minority, and the forces of selfishness, materialism and violence of one sort or another are growing and are openly challenging the claims of Christ. It is only through the inflow of God's power and love through the Holy Spirit and in the corporate fellowship that the Christian life in the real sense can be maintained at all. The world without Christ is hurtling down the path to self-destruction; an effective witness to the reality and the relevance of the Christian life in the modern world is therefore urgent in the extreme.

But apart from this general witness of Christians in their own country, there is still the urgent need for those who have a calling to go to other lands to witness to Christ. This urgency exists not only because there are still lands where the Church is very weak or even non-existent, but even more because the Church in each land has special gifts which it must share with other countries, so that the fullness of life in Christ may be manifested.

We need a new vision of God's working in present-day history and of His plan for the world-wide Kingdom. As country after country is being separated off by the iron curtain from the rest of the world, we need to see that the links between Churches in different countries shall be forged on a strong spiritual foundation so that political separation shall never mean spiritual isolation. The light of the Gospel may be kept burning in Asia, Africa and the islands of the seas, when possible disaster overwhelms the West. So there is all the greater urgency to build up the Church in these countries of newly emergent life, and also in India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon in their newly found political freedom and the vast possibilities and problems arising out of it.

The old organization of foreign missionary work has been undergoing great changes to meet this new situation, and in many places the missions are largely integrated with the indigenous Church. This is all to the good; but there are also some fresh paths opening out with a strong appeal of venturesome self-sacrifice to young men and women who have heard Christ's call for service overseas.

1. There are those who feel called to train in some trade or skilled technical work such as would enable them to get a post in a business or engineering firm as experts, or else as officers in railway or government employ in eastern countries, in Africa or the tropical islands. Their over-ruling purpose in so doing would be to make their witness and Christian contribution through their work and the contacts it provides, as well as during any spare time they may have. In this way they may be able to get into countries and into social circles from which Christian missionaries are more or less excluded. It might often be difficult for them, in such a life, to keep true to their high calling, but where, by the grace of God,

they were true to it, their witness would carry much greater weight than that of the average missionary.

2. What follows applies particularly to India, but might be modified to apply to other countries emerging into political freedom. In such countries the first qualification for the missionary is that he should have the mind to identify himself in all possible ways with the people to whom he goes. In so doing he not only follows St. Paul, who made himself "all things to all men," but he is sharing the spirit of his Master, who "made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." While such missionaries will have their own particular gifts and be filled with evangelical fervour, they know that they must share in life and work with their fellow-Christians in India who have the same calling. So, as one very understanding Indian Christian has suggested, they might join an Indian Order of Missionaries. There are one or two Indian missionary societies, and by joining themselves to one of these, the above suggestion becomes practicable.

Such a society is the National Missionary Society of India (with headquarters at Madras), which was founded by Indian Christians some forty-six years ago, and which has nine fields (each attached to one particular denomination) in different parts of India. This society is not in a position at present to pay the salaries of missionaries from foreign countries, but their friends, or a society in their homeland, could no doubt be found to guarantee a maintenance allowance for them, and this might be paid to them through the National Christian Council. In this way, though their support might come from the homeland, their life and work would be guided by their Indian colleagues in the Indian society. In any case such men or women should be prepared for very simple living in Indian style, sharing the burdens with their fellow-workers. It would also be advisable that they should be unmarried, at least until they become thoroughly familiar with the Indian conditions. Those who come in this way can be assured of a very hearty welcome not only from the Indian Church but also from the Indian people to whom they go.

3. Finally, as one who has himself been an active member of a Christian *ashram* (or community) for the past thirty years, I would commend to those who have the call to give themselves for Christ's Kingdom in India seriously to consider joining (either temporarily or more permanently) one of these *ashrams*, of which there are eighteen or more in India and Ceylon. There are *ashrams* for celibate men and similarly for women; there are also a few *ashrams* where married couples have a place, but in that case both husband and wife must have a vocation for that life. Some *ashrams* are interdenominational while others are connected with a particular denomination.

The aim of the *ashrams* is to glorify Christ by drawing their fellow-men into vital touch with Him through a life of prayer, of love to one another and of humble service. We engage in various types of service and live together a simple community life in which racial, educational and economic differences are sought to be transcended through the love of Christ.

An Ancient Church Revives

P. O. Philip

THE members of the ancient Christian community who have their home in the Malayalam speaking country of Kerala* (Travancore-Cochin State and the Malabar district of Madras State) are known to the outside world as "Syrian Christians." This is not because they have any racial connection with the people of Syria, but because they have been using Syrian liturgies from very early times. Their history up to the sixteenth century is almost a blank, though there is a tradition which attributes the founding of the Church in Malabar to St. Thomas, the apostle. Unknown missionaries belonging to some Churches of the East must have played their part in establishing the Church here. But the Church so established was not able to maintain any relationship with the mother Church. Therefore, any bishop or group of Christians who came from any foreign country was warmly welcomed, without raising any question about their particular beliefs or ecclesiastical connection. It was in this manner that the Church in Kerala came, at different periods of its history, under the sway of the Nestorian Church and the Monophysite Jacobite Church.

With the coming of the Portuguese to the west coast of South India in the sixteenth century as merchants and political adventurers, the Roman Catholic Church with its bishops and religious orders also appeared on the scene. The latter used fully and often unscrupulously the political power and prestige of the Portuguese for bringing the Church in Kerala under the Pope of Rome. Archbishop Menezes of Goa, who was also the Portuguese Viceroy of India, came to Malabar in 1599, toured among the churches with great show of power and pomp for about six months and then summoned a synod of the clergy and laymen at Udayamperoor in June, 1599. Here under duress the representatives of the Church were made to accept decrees previously prepared by the Archbishop, repudiating the doctrines and practices which Rome condemned, and substituting in their place the teachings of Rome. The Portuguese thus succeeded in bringing the Church of Kerala formally under the Pope of Rome. The Church of Rome ruled over the whole Church of Kerala for over fifty years. However, in 1653, under the leadership of their own men, the Christians of Kerala revolted and broke away from Rome. By this time, the Dutch had appeared on the Malabar coast and the Portuguese had withdrawn. Though the break with the Church of Rome had happened, its religious orders continued their work among the old Christians. As a result, it was possible for Rome to retain a section of the old Christian community under the authority of the Pope. It is this section which is

*The whole of the west coast of South India, including Kerala, is also referred to in old Indian history as Malabar.

now known as the Syrian Roman Catholics of Kerala.

From the past history of this ancient Christian community, briefly noted above, it can be seen that for centuries they lived in isolation from other Christian communities, as a minority among an overwhelming population of Hindus, under Hindu rulers. They must have had freedom to practise and propagate their religion; otherwise the increase in their members cannot possibly be explained. They must have maintained also the basic features of Christian faith and practice. They were able to escape absorption by Hinduism only in this way. One illustration is their adherence, through the centuries, to the Christian ideal of monogamy, in a society which practised polygamy and polyandry.

BUT it has to be admitted that they adopted, at the same time, certain outlooks and practices not in accord with the spirit of Christianity. For example, they adopted the caste system, in which they were given a recognized position among higher castes. They shared the prevailing Hindu outlook of regarding all religions as equal, with the result that the urge towards evangelism in them was weakened or eliminated. They followed their Hindu neighbours in their popular beliefs and superstitions about demons, astrology, sorcery, omens, acquiring merit through pilgrimages and vain repetition of prayers, and various other matters. Some of these beliefs and practices still persist in sections of this community in backward conditions.

With the domination of the Roman Church over the community in the first half of the seventeenth century, a new set of false beliefs and superstitions came to be superimposed on them in the name of Christianity. The teachings and practices of Rome on the adoration of the Virgin Mary and the saints, the veneration of sacred relics, the absolute authority of priests and bishops, indulgences and supernatural manifestations of saints naturally gave rise, among those who had no education or knowledge of the Bible, to a crop of corruptions and evils.

In the early years of the nineteenth century, the two Indian States of Travancore and Cochin came under the protection of the British. The Church Missionary Society sent a Mission of Help to the Syrian Church in 1816. The first missionaries of the Society worked in co-operation with the Bishops of the Syrian Church for about twenty years. Differences then arose and the Church Missionary Society decided to turn to missionary work among non-Christians. Meanwhile, the missionaries in co-operation with some of the leaders of the Syrian Church had translated the Bible into Malayalam. Till then the Bible was known only in Syriac, and that to the clergy alone. The Bible was printed in Malayalam, in the printing press established by the Church Missionary Society at Kottayam, and circulated. As a result of the study of the Bible and of the teachings of the missionaries, some leading clergymen of the Church were influenced in favour of evangelical Christianity. Abraham Malpan, a teacher in the theological seminary of the Church, was the most prominent among them. He became the leader of a movement for reformation within the Church. His object

was to purify the Church from the beliefs and practices imbibed from Hinduism and the corruptions of faith imposed by the Roman Church. Towards this end, he introduced some changes in the Syriac liturgy in use in the Church from ancient times.

It was the time-honoured custom to read or sing the liturgy in Syriac —a language not understood by the people. He therefore translated into Malayalam his revised liturgy and used it in worship. He omitted from the liturgy prayers to the Virgin Mary and the saints, and in the order of service for the Holy Communion made such changes as he believed to be scriptural. Being a powerful preacher, people flocked to his parish church to listen to him. He met with strong opposition from the Metropolitan of the Church and those who did not favour the reform. Though the Metropolitan who came into office later supported him, trouble arose from the Patriarch of the Jacobite Syrian Church in Antioch. Finally the parishes which favoured the reforms lost all their ancient churches and properties and formed an independent episcopal Church with no ecclesiastical allegiance to the Jacobite Patriarch or any other foreign prelate. This Church is known as the Mar Thoma Syrian Church.

When the Mar Thoma Church was losing one by one, through the judgments of law courts, its old parish churches and properties, and when the future looked very dark, a few men, after much prayer, decided to start a missionary society for preaching the Gospel to those among whom they lived. A small organization, under the name of the Mar Thoma Evangelistic Association, was formed. This was sixty-four years ago. To-day it has developed into the missionary society of the Church, doing evangelistic work not only in the Malayalam country, but in Mysore, Bombay Province, and Madhya Pradesh. While the annual income of this Association in the first year was less than Rs. 20, its present annual income from voluntary contributions is over Rs. 100,000. Groups of devout men and women conduct four *ashrams* in different parts of India, under the auspices of this Association. Over 10,000 non-Christians have been added to the Church in Kerala and outside as a result.

IT is under the auspices of this Evangelistic Association that a great Christian convention for the deepening of spiritual life is held every year at a rural centre, Maramen. It is held for a week and is attended by about 40,000 Christians of all Churches.

Realizing the great need of giving instruction to children through Sunday schools, the Mar Thoma Sunday School *Samajam* was organized forty years ago. It is doing very good work in all the parishes of the Church, giving religious instruction to children. Those engaged in this important work in the parishes do it voluntarily.

A women's missionary society also came into being about thirty years ago, with branches functioning in every parish. The missionary interest of women is aroused and directed along channels of fruitful service. Here also the service is rendered by voluntary laywomen.

The Church has realized, as never before, that missionary work

can be carried on only in a very limited measure, through a paid agency, however highly developed it may be. The emphasis on voluntary lay evangelism has been receiving much attention in the Church, mainly through the consecrated and able leadership given by the late Bishop Abraham Mar Thoma (died 1947). For giving necessary training to men and women in Bible study and evangelism the Church has two centres —one for men and the other for women. Lay people come here for about three months a year. After training, they go back to their villages and continue in trade or agriculture or home duties better equipped to bear witness for Christ by their life and work.

Noteworthy as are some of the signs of new life in the Mar Thoma Church referred to above, there is one feature in its life which deserves special mention. It is the succession of educated and consecrated men who have been giving their lives for the service of the Church in a real spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice. This Church has no foreign mission behind it, as many Churches in India have willing and ready to give financial and other help. It has to depend on its own limited resources for the support of its clergy and bishops, for the erection of buildings for its churches, schools and theological institutions, and also for all matters relating to advance in evangelism and missionary work. So those who hear the call and take up full time service in the Church expect only allowances which barely meet their needs. There is perhaps no other Church in the world whose bishops receive such low allowances as in the Mar Thoma Church.

And yet, it is indeed heartening to see that every year a good number of able and devoted men with university education enter the ministry of the Church for pastoral and evangelistic work. They consider it a privilege to serve the cause of Christ in this way. So long as this continues, the Mar Thoma Church, though small in numbers (about 200,000) holds every promise for new and fruitful forms of service for the kingdom of God in India.

What is the Largest Protestant Denomination?

The Lutheran World Federation has recently issued figures to show that the Lutherans constitute the largest of the Protestant denominations. They claim a membership of over sixty-eight millions throughout the world. Of this figure Lutheran Churches and Missions comprising some fifty-one millions in thirty-three countries are associated in the Lutheran World Federation, which thus claims to be the largest of the ecumenical confessional organizations. The membership outside the Federation is to be found in Union Churches (such as those in Germany) in which they join with Reformed or Calvinist groups.

The bulk of the membership of the Lutheran World Federation is to be found in seven countries, of which six are in Northern Europe and the seventh is the United States. This raises the notoriously difficult question of the definition of church membership, since the Lutheran definition covers all ages and in several countries includes practically the total population of the country. Moreover, in some of these countries it is possible to be a member of the State Church and of another denomination at the same time. The degree of commitment involved in church membership is in some of these areas very slight.

The Lutheran World Federation has done a remarkable work in the relief of distressed Lutheran Churches across the world since the war.

Indigenous Evangelism in Africa

R. H. W. Shepherd

CONCERNING some natural men St. Paul declared: "That which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them" (Rom. 1:19). And in another place we are told how he and Barnabas declared that God had suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He left not Himself without witness among them (Acts 14: 16, 17). How often such passages haunt the mind of the missionary in Africa as he seeks to evangelize those who are still outside the Kingdom. One of the marvels to a missionary in South Africa, in close touch with heathen life, is the number of parallels he finds to Old Testament and New Testament custom and usage by which divine truth can be conveyed or illumined. Let him take an illustration from some phase of Western life and many primitive Africans have nothing on which to grip. But let him take an illustration right from the heart of the Bible, and even illiterate men are all alert, for it comes close to "their business and bosoms."

This is partly because life among South African tribes is in many respects like life in Biblical lands and times. To those whose early days have been passed, as were the writer's, in the midst of European cities, a stay among the Bantu makes the Scriptures to be lit up and to come home with freshness and force.

The pastoral life the rural people lead makes the losing of a sheep and the joy of finding it an everyday occurrence. Among them no one dare enter a cattle or sheep fold by scaling the wall, but only through the gate. It is the mark of a thief to climb up some other way. It is not unusual to find the heir, like the elder brother in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, possessing a scanty share of the stock, while minors in the lifetime of the father receive numerous gifts or portions. For generations ploughing has been done by means of oxen. Liquids are often contained in bottles of skin; especially is milk stored in this way. Diseases like leprosy are prevalent in many parts. The windowless dwellings make the losing of a coin a common occurrence, and the poverty of the inmates gives it seriousness. Women and children have little place in Bantu social life, just as in Old and New Testament times. Paternal and maternal cousins are termed brothers and sisters. Generally, the Bantu, like the Jews, have no love for the sea, but are dreadfully afraid of it. They receive knowledge through parable and simile more easily than by any other method. The dialogues in the Gospels in which Jesus gives His opponents a choice of alternatives greatly appeal to their logical minds.

A people whose own tribal divisions are so marked a feature of their life follow with interest the fortunes of the tribes of Israel. Even the genealogical tables of the Bible lay their spell upon them, for the African loves to trace his ancestry, and especially that of the nation's chiefs and great men. The Old Testament institutions of polygamy

and circumcision are familiar features of Bantu social custom. The story of how Hannah prayed for a child is paralleled in many African homes, where childlessness is reckoned the direst of calamities. At the birth of a child the mother is reckoned unclean till an animal has been sacrificed. To touch a corpse is to make oneself impure. The immediate relations of the deceased are unclean. Shaving the head is a sign of mourning. Corpses are buried on the day of death. Dancing and singing by the women used to greet the return of victorious troops, as in the days of Saul and other Old Testament heroes. Names given to children are commemorative of circumstances at the time of birth or indicative of qualities with which it is hoped they may be endowed. A woman at the time of marriage has her face veiled. Dreams are accepted as messages from the unseen, and play an important part in the guidance of everyday affairs.

THERE are more significant parallels. In 1882 one of the early missionaries to South Africa wrote: "It has been said that the Caffres have no name for God, and indeed until the other day I thought so myself. But, having ridden to a distant kraal, with our interpreter, to speak to the people, and addressing myself to the chief, I asked him who made the sun, moon and stars. He at once said RUTHLANGA, and yesterday, in visiting another kraal, I made use of the same term, instead of UTIKLA, the Hottentot term, and they seemed all to know it. I have mentioned the word to several of our own people, who say it is the Caffre name for the Great Being who made all things."

At the same time it is true that an outstanding feature of Bantu religion was a worship of spirits as distinct from God Himself. The raw Bantu carried a haunting sense that men, animals, trees and all the forces of nature were the abodes of spirits requiring worship, and more especially, to be appeased. Above all, they feared the shades of the ancestors, so jealous were they believed to be of their honour and ready, if neglected, to do them hurt.

It is this haunting sense of ancestral shades that has given the "witch-doctor" his opportunity. In the case of sickness or death, particularly of a chief, the "doctor" is sent for to "smell out" what enemy has been guilty of causing the death. More often than not the latter is said to be some man who, by his success, has earned the enmity of his less fortunate fellow - tribesmen. The doctor sometimes has the name pronounced by means of ventriloquism.

One of our ablest South African missionaries in modern times told this story: "A chief had died, and I knew it was from tuberculosis from which he had long been suffering. His brothers sent for a famous doctor. The doctor was clever enough to know that he could do nothing, but he remained in the village till the chief died. Then he gathered the men of the family into a hut and said: 'I will not tell you, but you will hear the ancestral spirits tell you who killed your chief.' Then they heard quite distinctly the name of the man who had 'killed the chief.' Fortunately for him, some good soul at once slipped away and told him what

had taken place, and he fled to the bush. That night his village was surrounded, every one of his huts and everything in them was burnt, and had he been found there, he would have been slaughtered. He had to keep to the bush and keep constantly on the move, or they would have caught him. I heard very secretly what was going on, and at once sent word that I wished to meet the leading men of the clan to condole with them upon the death of their chief and also to give some advice to the heir. I had a very large meeting. No one knew that I had any idea that a doctor had been at the village. I talked round and round for some time, and then said to the heir: 'You will need to be very careful in your conduct. Your magistrate knows a great deal about your customs and evil practices. I also know something of them, and over and above this the Word of God knows about them.' I then read the verses in Isaiah 8:19, 20: 'And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.' The Xhosa version, in place of 'chirp,' uses their own word for a ventriloquist, and I put special emphasis on it. The faces of the old men near me were a study—blank amazement, then very significant looks at one another. I said no more. But I heard later on, from the same secret informer, that as soon as I left the old men had a consultation and decided that the hunting of X must be given up. I and he, too, were pretty certain that had it not been for this meeting they would have made an end of him, as they were quite certain that the ancestral spirits had named him as the one who had killed their chief."

Striking parallels to Christian beliefs are found in Bantu thought. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission" is a truth easily grasped by Bantu hearts. In a primitive village the house-father or head is always a priest, who, at the command of the witch-doctor, must offer animal sacrifice in times of calamity. The beast chosen for this offering by blood must be the best and without blemish, and must be one of the family's own. No purchased thing will do. Every family, indeed, attempts to keep a strain of cattle which are the sacred possessions of that house, and from among such the sacrificial ox is taken. The one afflicted and for whom the sacrifice is made is assumed to identify himself with the animal slain. Thus the thought of Christ as the stainless One, who lived amongst us, being the sacrifice for sin provided by the great Supreme Spirit, who is father of all men, consequently comes with no strangeness to African minds.

THE Bantu language in its various dialects is rich in terms for sin, sacrifice and atonement — richer than English and almost as rich as Hebrew.

The African carries a clear sense that no man dies as a beast dies. His language recognizes a distinction in the passing of a human and that of a lower animal; it says of the man that "the soul has gone out," but the beast is "dead." Men who have gone are in the land of shades, where they continue in a personal life almost identical with the Hebrew idea of Sheol. In that

life they still retain a direct interest in the moral and material well-being of their family. The burial formula at the heathen grave runs: "Thou hast left us in peace: thou art going to a land of peace; intercede for us." This belief in an after-life was so real as to lead to awful horrors, for it was thought a shame to allow chiefs and others to pass into the spirit-world without companions, slaves and wives. The death of a chief was the signal for wholesale slaughter, that of attendants he might have enough.

In no respect, perhaps, does the Christian message come more closely to the African mind than in its promise of peace. For no other boon does the Bantu so passionately crave. It has often been remarked that while the African in childhood and youth shows a countenance smiling and care-free, the years succeeding middle-life find sadness and fear chiselled on every feature. The Gospel has been to thousands the gift for which, all unknowing, they have been in search. Its acceptance is soon reflected in the face.

Bearing a message that is in many respects along the line of Bantu thought but infinitely more definite and satisfying, and carrying a Book that on so many pages depicts life as found in African villages, the missionary goes on his way. It has been my lot to enter many a village primitive in the extreme, where on the surface life has been low, naked and animistic; and also to meet crowds that outwardly seemed far distant from our Christian faith. But in every such scene there has come to me the sense that I am not the first to enter on that way: there is One who has gone before and who has not left Himself without a witness.

Conversion by Correspondence

The following account of what would appear striking persistence in face of conditions often regarded as impossible, is taken from a recent number of the *Alliance Weekly*, the magazine of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in the United States:

> In early 1949 the Professor of English in a large university in India read in *The Reader's Digest* about the Christian Relations Department of the Bristol Manufacturing Corporation, R.I. Noting that the unique department specialized in helping individuals with problems, the Professor, member of a sect of fire worshippers, wrote regarding a problem of his own. Bristol President, Maurice C. Smith, Jnr., answered the letter and at the same time asked a Christian worker in India to try to win the Professor to Christ. This however, was "impossible," the Christian worker replied, the Professor being part of an unreachable group. But not to be stopped, President Smith wrote letter after letter to the Professor, until a year later he received a reply signed, "Yours in Christ." Now the Bristol President is awaiting the arrival of the Professor, Rustam Zal, who will enter the graduate school of Wheaton College this fall to begin study for his Ph.D. degree.

Religious Broadcasting in Nigeria

J. A. Angus

THE broadcasting of religious services in Nigeria first came up for consideration at a meeting of the Christian Council of Nigeria in 1949. Recent developments have brought the subject into considerable prominence at the meeting held in August this year.

The 1949 meeting recommended that in all the five or six towns having a radio rediffusion service a special committee should be set up, under Christian Council auspices, for religious broadcasting, and that as Radio Nigeria developed we should give special attention to the subject. The great enthusiast for this method of Christian evangelism was Dr. Carson, an American Baptist missionary, who for a time bore practically alone the responsibility of daily broadcasts in his own station of Port Harcourt, and who was very anxious to see the opportunity seized throughout Nigeria.

The background of broadcasting in Nigeria may be described briefly. Some fifteen years ago the Government of Nigeria supplied its capital, Lagos, with a rediffusion service. Programmes were picked up at a specially built receiving station and then relayed along wires to all those who paid five shillings a month for the loud-speaker "boxes." Then a number of other large towns were supplied with a similar service. At first all the programmes were those of the B.B.C., chiefly the overseas programme, which includes a very fair proportion of religious services, brief daily devotions, and religious talks. Nigeria relayed these as much as the news, general talks, music and entertainment. All was in English and only the English-speaking Africans could appreciate it. The number of such, if only a small minority in the community, is considerable; most of them are at least nominally Christian, and undoubtedly the religious services were, and are, appreciated.

The first step had been taken to make Nigeria radio-conscious. It was very limited, since it could only reach those who lived in the few big towns equipped with a rediffusion service, who knew English and were willing to pay three pounds a year for the hire of their radio "boxes." My experience of visiting homes suggests that it is common to get full value for one's money—the set never seems to be turned off! How akin the whole world is!

With the improvement in short-wave sets many Europeans and some Africans acquired their own receiving sets, but to the ordinary villager radio was still practically unknown and not very seriously desired. One chief I know—a young man, progressive and a Christian—has his own set, and during the war took down the news in shorthand and circulated it to the few educated people, African and European, in his town.

After a time some local programmes were put on, even while most continued to come from the B.B.C. To begin with, the local programmes were special talks to schools, which were encouraged to hire loud-speakers. Then other

things were added, such as local music, talks of local interest, and, at any rate at Ibadan, as far back as the war days, a half-hour religious service on Sunday.

The service was supplied and run by the Posts and Telegraph Department and the Public Relations Office—in other words almost entirely by radio amateurs who did the work as an extra to their other duties.

It is only in the last year or two that we have sought to take religious broadcasting very seriously, inspired by the Christian Council. Dr. Carson began it in Port Harcourt with a service on Sundays from 8.30 to 9 p.m. and on weekdays daily prayers from 6.30 to 6.45 a.m. Later the work was shared between all the local Protestant Churches—Anglican, Baptist, Methodist, Salvation Army, and the Qua Iboe Mission. Records are used for hymns; there is an address on Sunday; on weekdays there are two records, a reading and a prayer. A request to start a similar service in Lagos was readily granted. Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, and the Salvation Army take the service in turn, on Sundays from 8.30 to 9 p.m., on weekdays from 7.30 to 7.45 p.m. In Lagos on occasion we are able to make use of live choirs, or a soloist; and usually there is a brief talk on weekdays as well as on Sundays. The Lagos programme goes out on the recently erected "Radio Nigeria" —a not very strong transmitting station that can be picked up on ordinary sets. I doubt whether very many outside Lagos hear it as yet, but there are a few who do.

All of us who broadcast are very much untutored amateurs; in no town are there many to share the responsibility for daily broadcasting; and no doubt some of our work is poor judged by British standards. But the principle of religious broadcasting has been established; very seldom indeed, if at all, has the announced programme failed to come on, and we know it is listened to and appreciated. Mostly we use English, but we are encouraging vernacular services, though with few vernacular records the hymns present difficulties. Choirs are not yet very satisfactory. A recent evangelistic campaign in Eastern Nigeria made good use of broadcasting in the towns that have it.

THE authorities welcome our work; they create no difficulties over scripts; and at the moment look to the Christian Council to direct and advise on the service. Beyond saying that the religious broadcasts, local and from the B.B.C., are appreciated, it is difficult to assess the extent of their influence. Many of our Christian folk listen to them and thev are a boon, especially to the old and sick. I know very well a greatly honoured minister, now old and bedridden, to whom they are a great joy. His wife's one complaint is that the services are too short, but doubtless they are long enough for the majority.

As regards the future, the Government have decided that Nigeria must have a radio service worthy of its size and importance, and that a real effort must be made to reach the mass of the people, who live in the villages. It is no easy matter. It must be cheap and simple; cheap, easily serviced receiving sets are not readily come by. Language presents a difficulty. There are five or six widely used

vernaculars and a host of others; and English, though the lingua franca for the educated, only touches a minority. Good professional knowledge of broadcasting is practically non-existent in the country. Existing apparatus is not too good. But there is something on which to build. The B.B.C. has seconded Mr. T. W. Chalmers, until recently Controller of the Light Programme, to head up the new "Radio Nigeria." He has begun his task with courage and hope, and is recruiting the necessary professional staff.

IT was, I understand, Mr. Chalmers who introduced religion to the B.B.C.'s Light Programme, and he is most anxious to have it in Nigeria. He has already met our Lagos Committee, and hoped to attend the Christian Council in August this year, when we could consider the matter on a Nigeria-wide basis. It seems likely that we shall develop on lines similar to Britain. We shall have a Nigeria Religious Broadcasting Committee, meeting once or twice a year; and regional committees for the Northern, Western and Eastern regions, each of which will have its own station at Kaduna, Lagos and Enugu. The Committees will arrange and advise on programmes; "Radio Nigeria" will give its expert help in making our broadcasting as good technically as it can be.

So far only Protestants have sought to undertake religious broadcasting; it has been a Christian Council activity. The Roman Catholics will now come in. There is every hope that the excellent spirit of religious broadcasting in Britain will set our Nigerian standards. We are fortunate in having in Nigeria, at the University College at Ibadan, Dr. James Welch, late Director of Religious Broadcasting for the B.B.C. We are assured of his help.

It seems that in Nigeria a well-conducted campaign of religious broadcasting can help forward the work of the Church, especially in the following directions. Most of our churches are in villages, led by sincere but neither well-trained nor well-educated catechists. The radio can be a means of setting standards of worship, and providing teaching richer and more edifying than the average catechist can give. It can help the isolated catechist and other leaders, giving them spiritual food for their own growth and for them to pass on to their Christian communities. It can help to meet the ceaseless questions of the restless, searching minds of the young folk, questions which never occur to the older church leaders, not brought up in the modern Africa of schools, advanced education, political and economic unrest, and world-wide contacts. The villages will be a most promising field of radio evangelism. Meanwhile we can learn how to use the radio to the best purpose; and we shall welcome the promised assistance of the professional "Radio Nigeria" staff in attaining good standards of radio technique.

There is one big difference between Britain and Nigeria. Nominally Britain is a Christian country and the religious broadcasting can without offence all be Christian. Britain has avoided any uncharitable beating of denominational drums, which would offend some so deeply and rejoice the hearts of others; but it maintains unquestionably the one fundamental loyalty to Jesus

Christ, which beneath our differences unites us all. It is open to criticism no doubt; but without becoming nebulous it avoids giving unnecessary offence. It is a great field of truly ecumenical evangelism, edifying, consoling, challenging and worshipful. It is probably doing a great deal, not only in sowing seed, but also in quietly removing from the soil the stones and the weeds that hinder the growth to full fruition of the seed. We believe that in Nigeria religious broadcasting can serve the same ends.

But Nigeria is not even nominally Christian. The Christian community is a quite small minority. It is influential, for the bulk of the educated at least profess Christianity and these are the leaders in what we often term the "new Africa." Nevertheless, at least fifty per cent. of the people are Moslems, and in Northern Nigeria Islam predominates with its Islamic traditions many centuries old. Many are still pagan animists. Animism does not lend itself in any way to anything approaching religious broadcasting; but a demand for Moslem services is almost inevitable. It may be wise to anticipate the demand and invite them to the air. The Government is, I tnink, certain to take that line.

What should be the policy of the Christian Church? Should it concern itself as little with the broadcasting of Moslem worship as it does, say, with entertainment, or should it show a very definite interest in it, a positive and helpful one? We cannot claim the air as an exclusive Christian preserve. If we do, we may easily create antagonisms of a type that would eventually exclude us from the air. Without in any way compromising our conviction that Jesus Christ is the one true Lord and Saviour of all mankind, we can, I think, show real charity in the way we react towards Moslem broadcasting. As in Britain there is some working together in broadcasting of the Reformed and Roman communions, so in Nigeria, I think, we can and should attempt the far more difficult task of including the Moslems.

OUR history and experience, and maybe too our faith, give us an initiative. If we take it and in the right spirit, it can, I think, help much towards forwarding Christ's kingdom of light, peace and charity. We shall have to give consideration in our Christian Council meeting to this aspect of the problem of religious broadcasting. May we be guided to frame a right policy.

Beyond stating that the Christian Church has got in on Nigerian broadcasting on the ground-floor and that it is welcomed, there is little more to say at the moment, save to try to assess the hopes it encourages and the problems it raises. In Nigeria and elsewhere it is one of those living subjects for which Christian Councils are peculiarly equipped to deal.

U.S. CHURCH FIGURES, 1950

The annual compilation of Church statistics in the United States compiled by the *Christian Herald* reports that the total of all religious bodies in the United States was 83,705,280, an increase of nearly three millions on 1949. Of this vast figure the Protestant Churches have 58.5%; the Roman Catholics 33.2%.

France Overseas

L. K. Anderson

IN France and her overseas territories this is being written on election day. Here in Cameroun, several candidates for the office of delegate to the local assembly have been carrying on a brisk pre-election campaign. Interestingly enough, some of these candidates are Africans, others are Europeans who have lived in Cameroun for some time. Much of the pre-election talk and propaganda has centred about the alternatives of having an African, who knows his own people best, as a delegate to the Cameroun Assembly, or a white man, who may not have the interest of the African so much at heart, but who has an entrée into political circles in France. The arguments on both sides sound conclusive and opinion seems divided. Unfortunately many citizens, worldly wise and rather cynical, agree with a friend who yesterday declared, " Black or white, it makes little difference to me; all who are elected have only their own interests at heart." That statement, far too prevalent among the masses of literate Africans, gives evidence of an attitude, a state of mind, that is at once pathetic and dangerous.

To take up residence again in this part of Africa after twelve years' absence has necessitated much less of an adjustment on our part than we anticipated. It is true we had no such thing as elections, paved city streets, electricity and water supplies in the large towns. We did not meet young men and women who speak casually about their last visit to Paris, and about sending their children to school in Europe. The one thing that keeps impressing itself upon us over and over again is just this: how slowly, how terribly slowly, Africa is changing.

Some things we would not want to be changed. Pray God that the gaiety and limitless source of good humour in the African may never be changed. Let us earnestly seek to conserve that warm affection that builds loyalties stronger than we can find among most people. Their patient endurance, their sense of family unity, and above all their unerring, intuitive search for God must be maintained.

But for years Government and Mission alike have been trying to elevate the standard of living; they have taught essentials of hygiene and sanitation, and one sees very little progress. Deeper than that one becomes increasingly aware of the little change in the soul of the African. For example, the amazing capacity for exploitation of the African by the African, if sufficient power is given him; the utter selfishness that motivates the average man in authority, who insists on bribes to such an extent that it has become the natural thing to pay for the simplest official business transaction if you want results; the lack of dependability, of genuine honesty.

Why is all this so shocking? Why does it seem surprising that the African has developed these weaknesses in his character, adding to them the techniques and vices of the European nations, instead of

following the precept and teaching of Church and school? The townspeople remain very much as they were thirty years ago, but the educated, the governing class have all had direct contact with some Christian organization working in the country, and it seems strange that so little evidence is to be observed of any real influence upon their moral and spiritual lives.

Superficially, one can give a simple answer: the African is simply following the customs and habits of those who have come from abroad. His imitative genius is one of his characteristics, so we see ourselves mirrored in their lives. But it is something infinitely deeper than that.

IN point of view of numbers, Bantu Africa has probably been one of the most successful missionary fields of modern times. The only opposition to the expansion of Christianity has been superstition, the local witch doctor, the practice of polygamy, and other deeply ingrained tribal habits. There have not been mass movements as such, but the expansion of the Chuch has been phenomenal. Naturally, the time of the missionaries was taken up shepherding the flock. The situation was so very different from that observed in any one of the Latin American countries, for example. There, each convert is known by name, the date on which he surrendered to Christ is noted, he receives individual attention. Here in Africa, we meet a convert, he is baptized, becomes one of a great host, and is promptly forgotten, unless he becomes a subject for disciplinary action or is a well-known character in the community. We minister to the masses, not to the individual. Think of the hundreds upon hundreds of schoolchildren who have passed through our institutions, made to conform to a moral code and ecclesiastical forms. Where a missionary or African pastor, teacher or friend has been able to give undivided attention to the individual, we have seen strong Christian characters developed. Perhaps we have thought that because of our large numbers Africa was rapidly becoming Christian, when actually what was happening was merely a veneer of acceptance covering, not changing, the soul of man. The veneer is wearing off and we see man as he is, or rather as he was, unregenerate, albeit somewhat refined by the experience.

We must restudy our approach and our relationship to the African. At the expense of retrenchment and withdrawal from widespread occupation, the solution may be concentration of effort where individual life will be free to exert an influence on another life. At any rate, we must change that cynical opinion: "It makes very little difference to me, black or white; all who are elected have only their own interests at heart." Africa is changing very, very slowly, in spite of all that people say and write to the contrary, for the soul of the people is the same.

THE BERLIN CHURCH RALLY

The story is told of a railway porter in Berlin listening to the crowds singing hymns in the station and feeling their devotion in spite of his own unemotional temperament. "If it goes on like this," he said, "we'll all go religious."

¶ *A comment on Bishop Neill's report*

Christian Leadership in Tropical Africa

H. G. Farrant

IN 1950 Bishop Stephen Neill toured East and West Africa at the request of the International Missionary Council, and made a survey of theological education with special reference to the training of the ordained ministry.* His report is an accurate description of what is being done, and the gathering together of so much information into one document is in itself of great value. His recommendations concerning what should be done are a spur to thinking. It is not to be expected that they will fit all parts of East and West Africa equally well because conditions differ in the huge area of the survey. This article is written from experience in Northern Nigeria and other parts of the Sudan which are all among the youngest of African mission fields, and from a doctrinal position that Bishop Neill would probably call conservative.

In the running commentary of the descriptive part of his report and in his presentation of a balance of different points of view, the Bishop has necessarily covered so much ground that anything I say in this article may be considered redundant. I can only claim that a complex document may leave a simple impression on the mind of the reader, and that the report left me with an impression that several things suggested by the Bishop would require modification before they would fit the place and conditions of which I have experience.

Concerning the ordained ministry, because of the fewness of ministers and their standard of training, Bishop Neill claims that "the training of ministers should be regarded as having the first, or almost the first, priority in the whole scene of the Christian enterprise of to-day." He also writes that "not even the famous mass movements in India have brought into the churches such masses of people as are now pressing in in every part of Africa. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that in fifty years' time tropical Africa might well be in the main a Christian country, taking, perhaps, the place of a paganized Europe as the main centre of Christian life in the world."

There is something puzzling in these two quotations, for Europe has a great many ordained ministers and Africa few, and if Europe is to become pagan and Africa Christian the provision of ordained ministers cannot be the whole answer to the need of the Church in Africa. The past is sometimes a guide to the future, and it will be helpful to know how the Church in Africa came to grow so rapidly. The process began with a handful of missionaries. Among missionaries in a pioneer field there is not nearly so big a difference between the work done by ordained men and that of unordained men and women as there is in the familiar pattern of church organization in Britain. Except for the administration of the sacraments all do much the

*This Report is available from the International Missionary Council, Edinburgh House, 2, Eaton Gate, London, S.W.1, price one shilling.

same work. Evangelism and the building and care of the Church are the burden of all.

The young Church copied this way, and everyone was active. "Andrew findeth his own brother Simon and brought him to Jesus" is the way in which the congregations have been brought together. If the Church is to keep in health and continue to grow the laity must continue to be workers. If the provision of well-educated, ordained ministers will result in their doing all the work and the members none they will be a blight and not a blessing. A Scottish idiom for membership of a local church is "to sit under Mr. So-and-so," and when members have attained to this restful part in church life they easily fall asleep. Training of the laity must be considered to be of equal importance to that of the ministry.

Overemphasis on a difference between the ordained and the unordained holds a danger. It begets a tendency to think of ordained ministers as an officer class instead of as servants of the Church. In a revolutionary army the difference between officers and men is small in a class sense. The fighters count themselves to be equals, and give loyalty to those who have shown themselves more capable in battle than the average. Revival in religion has this feature, and in pioneer mission fields, when fruit begins to come, the awakening knows little of distinction due to office. In placid times, in Army and Church, a less urgent need for leaders is felt and, as a means of discipline, the status of officers and ministers is accentuated.

The idea of discipline leaks into our thinking concerning the sacrament of communion. Suspension from its fellowship is almost the only punishment that the Church can inflict, and there is an inclination to keep its administration in the hands of a few. In many mission fields the number of ordained ministers is small, each spends much time going from congregation to congregation to give communion and difficulty is frequently experienced in making arrangements for a visit. When the celebration eventually comes, the emotion is not simply one of fellowship of members with the Lord and with one another; it has added to it the feeling of there being an unusual event which can only take place as the coming of a notable person. There should be more ordained men than there are.

IN a campaign for a better-trained ministry one must not be so vigorous as to cast a slur on the present men. In his report of the survey in East and West Africa Bishop Neill makes a plea for well-educated ministers, and has chosen for a slogan, "Saintliness is not enough." I cannot picture the Church going into battle with that for a cry. It is a bad choice. It contradicts the Bible, casts a slur on the saintly (the least saintly being the most annoyed), and, by suggestion, makes us take a figure in stained glass to be a saint. If in choosing a minister we are compelled to pick between a saint and a scholar we have no choice. We must take the saint, but this separation is artificial. Paul was and is a saint. We know he was a scholar. Did all his scholarship come from Gamaliel and none of it in direct inspiration from God?

Bishop Neill mentions two fields in which strongly organized

Churches of good size have reached, or very soon will have reached, saturation point in the absorbing of ordained ministers, though their number is very small. I think it likely that there are more fields in this predicament than those mentioned. It does seem to be absurd that a Church can take no more of that which it so urgently needs. The mischief, of course, is caused by the fact that a well-educated minister must be given a stipend that bears a reasonable relation to the salaries of other professions. The salaries come from Government, or profit-earning bodies, and the stipend from the voluntary gifts of the Church. The Church can only afford, or is only willing to pay for, a small number of highly educated ministers. This trouble will not be cured by training the ministry, but by training the laity.

SINCE the difficulty of providing an advanced theological education and the cost of adequate stipends conspire together to make the number of highly educated ministers very small, the Church must find, somehow, a sufficient number to care for the congregations. One must determine how high one can go in education and still get enough men. Having chosen this point and got enough men for the time being, these should be counted to be the standard ministers and honour be paid to them. Advance to a higher point in education must be a steady, unceasing progress for which the existing ministers will be the natural propagandists. At no time should there be such a lament about quality that all existing ministers feel that they are no good. Among catechists and evangelists there are men of great pastoral ability who are by character among the very reliable servants of the Church. If it is thought to be desirable not to ordain them, even though the smallness of the number of ordained men makes the administration of the sacraments difficult, then some of them should be licensed to give the sacraments.

There is no close parallel in Britain to the practice on the mission field of having great numbers of unordained catechists and evangelists. As a body, they are easily the most important element in the ministry of the Church. They are in direct contact with heathendom, they are personal soul-winners and shepherds of village flocks. In the field of which I have personal experience many scores of men have been put (officially by the Church) in charge of congregations, though no remuneration is given to them. When laymen do the work of ministers they demonstrate the full meaning of membership. Maintaining themselves by their own work gives them an influence with others, and they are among the best interpreters of the Christian way.

Until now this voluntary service has been given by farmers in rural areas, but there is no reason why the splendid witness should not be continued by highly educated laymen who are engaged in industry or commerce, in government service, or one of the professions. The training given to a farmer before taking a charge is usually a year, or more, of Bible instruction. A highly educated man in employment may not easily be able to give a year for preparation, but he can read widely and pursue study. He could be fitted for his charge by correspondence and by short courses of intensive instruction.

Two elements are necessary successfully to sustain the ministry of laymen. One is an ability for continuous teaching and the other is that respect must be given to the worker by the Church. Propaganda for a better educated ministry must never be of such a nature that the lay minister will feel that he is not wanted and the Church thinks him inferior.

So far I have written about men and now I turn to training. Higher theological training is of two kinds —that which is given by the Church, over which the Church has complete power, and that which is given in a University, over which the Church has power varying from none to a good deal. In writing of the first, Bishop Neill mentions the three categories into which theological training was divided, for convenience, by the Tambaram Conference. They are (in descending standard) the theological college, the theological school and the Bible school.

IN my opinion, it is psychologically a mistake to use "Bible" to designate the lowest standard of training. The book has been an extraordinary force in building the Church, and in East and West Africa it is the foundation of education. It ought to be kept as the backbone of all teaching. Its universality is an important quality. In pioneer mission work it is common to be told by government officers that one is bringing in a foreign religion. I always contended that since the teaching of Christ came from God, and was intended for all men, it cannot be foreign anywhere, and Bishop Neill records that in the area of his survey Christianity is now widely accepted as belonging to Africa. His report also says that "those who have been studying the subject have concluded that Hebrew modes of thought are much more likely to be congenial to the African than Greek, and that his understanding can link itself much more directly to the Bible itself than to the western accretions of interpretation that have become so much part of the western stock-in-trade that we often confuse them with the Bible itself."

The facts that the Bible is an inspired book and is expressed in a form of thought that is understandable by all races gives it its quality of universality. If its name is to be given to a course of instruction, it should be to the highest and not the lowest. The Church will advance all the more rapidly if its book is used freely in all education. Though knowledge is now immense in mass, and its details beyond counting, its points of contact with our faith are few and not novel. The internal combustion engine is the innocent cause of great social change and ferment, but no one has suggested that a knowledge of the engine is necessary for a minister of the Gospel. His concern is with the social change and ferment, and the ferment resolves finally into a moral question to which the Bible gives an answer.

Africa is in a ferment because she is fighting for equality, and the Bible tells of the revelation given to Paul, "that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel." The service of man is advanced by a modern philosophy as the only proper object of man's life, God being ignored, but Christ resolves all commandments into a perfect

balance of two, "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: . . . and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Instead of making study of the Bible one of a number of parallel courses, it should be the central core round which other things are seen in support or opposition.

When one comes to examine theological colleges, it is at once apparent that one of their influences is to perpetuate the divisions of the Church if they are narrowly denominational. I do not wish to speak of that because, happily, the mission field is in the lead in successful co-operation among Churches, and there are numerous union theological colleges. I wish to suggest that a theological college can be made an instrument for mending the breach that has been made by liberal thought. No Church is liberal in doctrine throughout all its membership. Each has conservatives and liberals. In the conditions that prevail in Africa, with the Gospel moving strongly in its life-bringing course, ministers must be trained to be evangelists, and the staff of theological schools should be evangelical and conservative.

The reputation of a school is made by its teachers. History shows how a medical school can rise to fame and sustain its reputation for a century or more because of a succession of able professors. A reputation would be made and kept by a theological school that had a succession of evangelical teachers, and it would gain the confidence and affection of Churches that held conservative doctrine. So Churches that are not wholly conservative can help towards unity by appointing staff to their theological colleges who are conservative.

In Universities the Church may not have much influence in the choice of professors and lecturers for a department of theology, but in so far as they do, their recommendation should be of evangelical and conservative teachers. If the theological school in a University is to fulfil its function, it must be in living relation with the Church outside the walls, and have the salvation of men as its only purpose. There will be opposition to such a concept in a University that houses Christians, Moslems, and Animists, but I feel that no body that calls itself educational can maintain such an attitude. The purpose of teaching is to spread an idea, whether it be mathematics, or geology. One cannot logically make an exception to the spread of the teaching about Christ so long as the teaching moves in the realm of mind, and physical and political forces are not invoked. What is claimed for the Christian way is admitted for others.

THE moment one comes to a University my claim that laity and ministry must have equal consideration in training becomes established. Forecasts of the number of students that will attend the theological school of a University give a very modest enrolment. But enlistment in secular courses will grow rapidly, and if to the Universities one adds the technical colleges which may, or may not, be affiliated to them, the number of students in higher education in East and West Africa will be very large.

Bishop Neill points out that Christians form a very large proportion of the total enrolment. It

is curious that this big number of Christian students is not widely appreciated as an asset of the Church. To pose an exaggerated contrast—do we think of the laity as mutinous troops to be held together by their officers, the clergy, or do we think of them as eager fighters looking for worthy leaders? Obviously neither is a true picture, but our minds ought to incline to the second. Highly trained laymen who are dedicated men will be a great strength to the Church and great effort should be made to help them. The Churches must do all they can, but there ought also to be a body in each University and college to stimulate fellowship among Christians and win non-Christians. I think the Inter-varsity Fellowship of Christian Unions is the body that will best suit the conditions of East and West Africa. Active undergraduates are likely to be active post-graduates.

I have thought a good deal on how the Church can best use highly educated ordained ministers in areas where they are very, very few, still a novelty, and a good deal ahead of what I have called the standard minister in training. The office to which only a few men attain is that of bishop, but not all Churches have bishops, and those that have rarely appoint young men straight from college to that elevated position. In the kind of field that I know a highly educated man would not be best employed if he were put in charge only of a congregation.

The motive for advocating a better education is to enable a minister to cope with the new forces that bear on Africa. If education has enabled him to do so, given him the answers to some of to-day's troubles, and integrated everything in Christ, then the best thing is to send him round the congregations to teach this. Even one intelligent mind in witness to Christ can educate a great many, and I am sure that he would be welcomed by ministers and people. If there are several rich minds, all the better. It is obvious that the teaching that I have suggested will be without denominational content, and that the young man, if his personality is right, will be well received in many Churches and be an influence towards increased fellowship. Such a ministry would not be a permanency. The need for it might pass: an increased number of highly trained men make the first few to be less unusual, or the men themselves may wish for change. The obvious next thing would be to have them teach in a theological school. Later there will be congregations that have developed sufficiently to engage the whole time and ability of the new type of minister.

MY argument, then, concerns the importance of the laity and asserts that they are to be trusted and not feared. Africa is in revolution, and the biggest revolutionaries are the Christians. They are changing society. They are in Church, school, politics, commerce, industry and the professions; they remain in agriculture and will rejuvenate it. To lead this army one must be a revolutionary, and the quickest way to that is to obey Christ literally. The main aspirations of Africa are in harmony with Christ's offer of life. As the people move towards their proper place among the nations, the revolutionary book shouts in their ears, "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ."

Christian Advance in the Philippines

E. K. Higdon

THE conflict between Communism and democracy daily assumes larger proportions in the Philippine Republic. The Government has failed either to pacify or to subdue the Hukbalahaps* and Communists have strengthened the determination of these tenant-farmers to try to secure by violence common justice and a decent living. They propose ultimately to control the nation. Communistic ideas are spreading throughout the islands of Luzon, Panay and Negros.

Dr. Jorge Bocobo who is now in the United States discussed the situation in an address in New York in June. He knows the Philippines as well as anyone, native or foreign. He has been professor and dean of the law school of the University of the Philippines, president of that state educational institution, a justice of the Supreme Court and Secretary of Public Instruction in the days of the Philippine Commonwealth. He is now chairman of the Code Committee and has recently drafted most of the Civil Code. Speaking of political conditions, Dr. Bocobo said:

> When we left Manila in April, there was a big tank at the south entrance to the city with soldiers on the alert. Buses were stopped and male passengers were searched for arms. You must have read in the papers how six of the leaders of the Philippine Politburo had been sentenced to death because they had organized rebellious propaganda. The evidence indicated that the Huk movement is Communist-led, and their leaders have some connection with Moscow. Communistic ideas are spreading throughout Luzon and the islands of Panay and Negros. The Philippine Government is doing its best but it is almost too late. These many years before and after Philippine independence, the Philippine Government has been rather lax or negligent in the matter of social and economic reform. The tenancy laws, although intended to protect the tenant, are very defective. I have found at least eight points at which the landlord is favoured. One of the conditions required by the American Government before financial aid could be given to the Philippine Republic was the immediate passage of a minimum wage law. That law has been passed after much opposition on the part of the vested interests.

The requirement of the United States Government referred to by Dr. Bocobo was one of the conditions recommended by the Bell Congressional Commission before a loan of $250,000,000 was granted. Two years ago a loan of $70,000,000 to assist the Philippines in post-war rehabilitation proved to be more than was needed —only $60,000,000 of it was spent —and the fact that $250,000,000 is now probably inadequate shows that economic conditions are bad. Commenting on this subject, Dr. Bocobo said:

> The Philippine Government is in financial difficulties. The main cause is that there is very little production while imports are two-and-a-half times the pre-war level.

*See Recovery in the Philippines—*World Dominion*—March-April, 1950.

Corruption is more widespread than it should be. It is not to be justified but it can be explained. Very large sections of the Philippine population suffered a moral collapse because they had an obsession during the war to beat the Japanese invasion by any means, fair or foul. This spirit seeped into their minds and now they unconsciously feel that robbing or cheating people other than the Japanese is not much different. Americans should not be too severely critical because the Filipinos have suffered a moral collapse while trying to show loyalty to America. We must pull many Filipinos out of this moral breakdown. Here the Christian Church must help. The evangelistic and the educational programmes must be strengthened.

The Philippines are America's fourth best customer. In fact, the Republic buys too much abroad that it could produce at home. A part of the $250,000,000 loan is to be used to increase the rice-growing acreage and the yield per acre. The Bell Report recommends that a fertilizer plant be started so that Filipino farmers may enrich their soil at a price within their economic reach. The average annual cash income *per capita* is $44. It is thirty-three times that amount in the United States. As ninety per cent. of all Filipinos depend on agriculture for a livelihood, and as practically all agrarian laws benefit the land-owner rather than the tenant, it is not difficult to understand why the seeds of Communism are growing well in Philippine soil.

Bocobo's analysis of the relationship between poverty and corruption is sound. He has good cause for his fear that the Government may be too late with its remedial measures. When he calls upon the Church to help, he does so not as an outsider—he was converted in 1902 and for forty years in public life has been militantly active in the Protestant movement—but as a man who knows from within what its limitations and possibilities are.

PROTESTANT churchmen have given special attention to rural problems during the last two decades. Stimulated by the emphasis on "the little man" at the Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council in 1928, they gave priority in education and evangelism to his needs. The war interrupted the programme and intensified the problems. But the Church tackled the post-war job with renewed vigour. It has marshalled the resources of home, school, pulpit; literature, literacy, journalism; Bible production and distribution; radio, work camps (both local and international), youth conferences; co-operatives—especially credit unions—and the inspiration and programme suggestions received in ecumenical meetings. It has increased its membership at a rate perhaps unsurpassed anywhere else in the world. It has developed within the Philippine Federation of Christian Churches a strong department of the rural church. It has organized an Association of Christian Schools and Colleges and maintained it at the cost of unusual personal sacrifice of its Filipino executive secretary and other officers. Sixty-four high schools and colleges, fifty-eight of them founded by Filipino Christians since the war, now have membership in that Association. The Church has made ventures in journalism for youth, for adults, for farmers, for preachers—two

new and two rejuvenated periodicals on an interdenominational basis—several new "trade" journals and school papers.

If Communism meets its match in the Philippines, the Republic will owe a large debt to the vigorous initiative and the vital, practical faith of Protestantism. And in so far as all of East Asia finds inspiration in the successes of that country, hundreds of millions of people will also be indebted to the Filipino Church.

THE Churches of the United States have co-operated well in material reconstruction and spiritual rehabilitation. Hundreds of buildings for religious purposes have been repaired or newly built by funds sent from America. Boards of missions or interdenominational agencies have sent commissioners to advise about Christian rural reconstruction, Christian higher education and religious education, mass communication—with special attention to radio—and methods of evangelism. The Presbyterians appointed short-term missionaries to fill the personnel gaps created by the war and the Methodists have included the Philippines in their plans for the Fellowship of Christian Reconstruction.* The Disciples of Christ concentrated on the training of long - term missionaries to do special types of work — public health, play and recreation, agricultural education, church history, religious education — requiring graduate study and in most cases graduate degrees in these fields. The Baptists and others transferred missionaries from China and several boards loaned staff members to co-operative organizations. The Protestant Episcopal council made an excellent contribution to the ecumenical character of the Church by founding St. Andrew's Seminary and welcoming students of the Philippine Independent Church (Aglipayan) to its classes and fellowship in Quezon City (Manila). During the 1950-51 school year, the seminary had twenty-nine students, ten of them Aglipayanos. The Philippine Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America requested the Kennedy School of Missions of Hartford Seminary Foundation to offer special training for candidates in preparation for the Philippines and the School arranged with Mrs. E. K. Higdon, M.A., to teach a five-hour, one-semester course in the History and Culture of the Philippines whenever there is a class of five or more. No such orientation studies as the Kennedy School now offers had ever before been available to missionaries for the Philippines.

This imposing list of what has been projected—and in the form I have given it, it is little more than a list of plans and programmes—needs illustration. We look first to the Department of the Rural Church for examples of dreams coming true.

Fourteen hundred and forty-three rural ministers serve 2,572 congregations. A quarterly Bulletin goes to them and to an equal number of lay persons, 3,000 copies of each issue, and is read by three or four times that number. The Christian Rural Fellowship, organized in 1948, has 200 members who pay two pesos (a dollar) per year as dues and who receive,

*See Christian Reconstruction in Asia—*World Dominion,* September-October, 1950.

not only the quarterly published in Manila, but also the Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletin and Rural Missions, published in New York City. They have a sense of fellowship with some 3,500 members in the United States, Canada and twenty-one other countries.

This department also maintains an Extension Loan Library of nearly 300 carefully selected volumes. Borrowers are encouraged to buy the books loaned to them and such sales amounted to nearly $180 in a six-month period in 1950.

FURTHERMORE, the department has held four post-war National Rural Church Institutes. The latest from 30 April to 12 May 1951, attended by thirty-one ministers and lay persons, eight faculty members, and seventeen resource men and women. Students evaluate this institute in such statements as these*:

> My faith in God was greatly strengthened by the Bible classes and chapel services. The Hymns of the Rural Spirit were very enlightening. The Social Teachings of Amos are very helpful in the understanding of our social problems to-day.
>
> The Home and Family Life lectures give me fresh knowledge on the Christian approach on love, courtship and marriage. The lectures on poultry and piggery are practical and stimulating. The chapel services and the agricultural motion pictures did me a lot of good.
>
> The field trips and the motion pictures on rural and agricultural life gave me valuable aids and information of what I could do to help in promoting food production and the utilization of made-in-the-Philippines products.

The Rev. Cornelio M. Ferrer, Director of the Department of the Rural Church, received his Bachelor of Divinity degree last spring from the Union Theological Seminary of the Philippines. He earned his Master of Arts degree in rural sociology in 1946-48 when he studied in the New York State College of Agriculture of Cornell University, McCormick Theological Seminary, and Drew University. Drew granted the degree. On 1 April 1950, Mr. Ferrer succeeded the Rev. Allen R. Huber, Disciples missionary, as director. His first report in this position reflects activities that neither a swivel-chair executive nor a metropolitan rural worker could accomplish. He made fifteen field trips in eleven months. He also wrote fourteen articles on rural life for Christian and secular journals; delivered thirty sermons and addresses, ten of them illustrated by visual aids; made ten calls at government bureaux and social agencies that deal with agriculture and other rural interests; and taught three weeks in a School of Ministerial Training.

Illustrations drawn from work with children and young people further testify to the effectiveness of the Protestant Church. In 195[illegible] more than 30,000 children attended Daily Vacation Bible Schools and it was expected last spring that the total would exceed that number this year. Young people who serve in these schools receive training annually in interdenominational institutes. Two hundred enrolled in two such institutes in 1951. The practice, begun some twenty years

**Philippine Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletin*—July, 1951.

ago, has resulted in excellent leadership for children.

The Protestant Church not only gives its youth constructive Christian work, such as conducting vacation Bible schools, but also fortifies its young people against the ideological attacks of Communism. *The Philippine Christian Youth,* a quarterly started since the war, has published a series of studies on Communism, dealing with its theories and its practices. About two years ago, even before the Huk uprising was generally recognized as Communist - controlled, one issue of thirty-six three-column pages was devoted almost entirely to that subject. This has been followed by additional material. The number for the second quarter of 1951 has lessons on: "Christianity or Communism in the Bible," "Communism's Breeding Grounds," "Christianity and Communism Compared," and "A Christian Programme for Action." Regarding social action, this statement represents the purpose of the study: "The Church should relate her programme to human needs in order to make the common man a follower of the Cross rather than a disciple of the hammer and the sickle." And in this number of *Philippine Christian Youth,* a full page of Calls for Service Adventures includes announcement of

> Three caravan training centres, two work camps, seven hospitals where aides are needed, one youth in industry experience—a month in Manila.

Youth combines Christian social service with personal calls and conversations to win people to Christ. One pastor, confessing his ignorance of what a caravan could do in his community, reported after the group had been there that:

> They fixed the fence, the altar, and painted the communion rails.
>
> They fixed the broken pews and benches.
>
> They campaigned for new members for the local youth fellowship, local youth and caravanners together visiting inactive members and outsiders.
>
> Twenty-four converts were baptized during the week and two young people dedicated themselves to full-time Christian service.
>
> The caravan made Jesus clear to the minds of our youth and showed what Jesus can do if and when the youth of the local church are consecrated to Him and to His work.

A YOUNG pastor tells of a Work Camp in his parish in the highlands of Northern Luzon. Eleven young people from five provinces of Luzon and from two other islands with several older men and women as counsellors spent the month of May in 1951 on the project. They constructed a social centre for the use of the community. This involved digging a drainage ditch, and erecting two buildings. The campers also led groups in play and recreation, carried on a Daily Vacation Bible School, and conducted public meetings each evening and church services on Sundays. Most of the manual labour was done by the campers, both men and women using saws, hammers, spades and shovels; but due to the fact that nine students failed to show up, some labourers had to be hired for a few days. The Roman Catholic priest tried to keep members of his church from helping even for pay but did not succeed. The common man responds to such practical Christianity as this.

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GIFTS for the maintenance and extension of the work will be gratefully received.

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The World To-day

E. J. Bingle

Chaos or Revolution?

A speaker at a recent conference remarked that the world was in a mess. There should be no disagreement about that. But, he went on more challengingly, if the world weren't in a mess there would be something wrong with our theology. This remark is well worth remembering when we are inclined to undue pessimism. We cherish somewhere in the depths of our hearts the secret wish that the world should be peaceful and prosperous and that we should be allowed to do as we like at the same time. The human desire to have it both ways, individually and on a world-scale, leads to some odd situations which tend to take a tragic turn. Nor is such tribulation, to use Biblical language, a sign of the End; it may well be the mark of the beginning of a new age, but we have no means of judging the coming of the End itself.

There are those who discern another pattern in the tribulation of our times. It is all part of a revolution which is sweeping the whole world and ushering in a new pattern of life, a new age. The Communist upheavals of our time are particular instances of this movement, as are also the new nationalisms of the East and the coming nationalisms of Africa. The revolution is the uprising of the submerged masses of Asia and Africa, and of other lands too, seeking a new dignity and a new standard of living. There are, so this view holds, world forces of a constructive kind ushering in a new era; of these we need to take account. They may bring in a new balance between Asia, Africa and the Western world which will not be to our advantage; the privilege of centuries is being challenged. While it is difficult to apply the term "revolution" to such vague and ill-defined movements, it serves to call attention to some more constructive features of our time.

The Over-Arching Tension

While these things are part of the framework of our time, it remains true that the particular burden which presses most heavily upon us is the tension between East and West, between the Communist and Communist-dominated areas and the Western world with its freer economy and democratic organization. It is not easy to describe these two worlds, because each uses the same words in totally opposed meanings. If the words which come from behind the Iron Curtain mean anything—and certain actions also—this same burden is also felt there, though responsibility for it is attributed differently.

The tension is an over-all one because it affects almost all parts of the world, though in differing degrees and in a variety of ways. It is obvious enough in Asia: the propaganda of the new régime in China, both within and outside its territory, is meant to underline it. India, though it would seek to escape it, cannot do so with the Communist world on its border and a hostile neighbour in Pakistan. The other states of South East Asia are full of fear and in many cases of actual civil war. Africa may still seem the continent

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are to be found, often in growing numbers in the fields overseas. "Everyone who goes from a Christian country to Africa or Asia will be regarded as a representative of Christianity. He may go into the Civil Service or the Army, or as a teacher or into commerce; but willy-nilly he goes as a missionary."-Archbishop Temple.

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of to-morrow, but the pressures of rearmament, of new nationalisms and more democratic governments, as well as of racial issues, may all serve to bring about increasing tension to be exploited by one side or the other. Americans still claim to find Britain rather fog-bound in failing to see clearly the issues before the world, while continental observers, with a different background from American prosperity and with large Communist minorities within their own areas, are critical of some American presuppositions.

ONE becomes aware of these conditions in any world-wide gathering of Christians. However much Christianity may be denounced as escapism, the marks and burdens of our time lie heavily upon Christians with a world-view, though they are apt to speak from the differing backgrounds of their own countries, cultures and situations. There are still occasional Christian voices from behind the Iron Curtain, both East and West, and they speak with accents and emphases which Christians from other countries find difficult to understand and interpret. It may be that even this slight measure of communication will cease, but while it lasts it ought to be listened to intently. There is still a measure of Christian unity across the world which needs to be guarded as a very precious thing.

In such conditions, while international gatherings are possible, what are the things which Christians have to say to each other across the divisions of Churches and ideologies? Certain emphases are discernible in recent conversations of this kind.

The Word and the Workers

There is, I think, a lively and growing concern with evangelism. It is a much abused word; there is, however, an increasing desire to bring face to face with the claims of Jesus Christ groups of men and women outside the Church as well as those within the Church whose committal is vague and intermittent. Beyond that generalization there is a great deal of frustration and confusion. Reports from different countries bring news of various experiments but even within the same country there is no common mind as to method or result. One notable thing is the evangelistic experiments of certain sections of the Roman Catholic Church which have been given considerable publicity in some Protestant circles.

There are not only whole groups or possibly classes of society outside the range of the Church but also areas of living which need evangelization. In regard to the working classes there are experiments being carried on in the Church of Scotland and the Church of England; experiments with the proletariat of Paris and the dockers of Marseilles have been recorded by Roman Catholic writers. In Switzerland new means are being tried to reach the professional classes, doctors, lawyers, teachers, even artists. A certain amount of new experiment is going on which cannot be recorded because any reference could probably embarrass and perhaps end the experiment. Much more experiment is needed, both along traditional lines and in entirely new ways.

From the discussions which are proceeding regarding these matters certain points seem to emerge. One

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is that experiments such as those referred to leave out of account the ordinary church member. Indeed he, or more probably she, is regarded as a pathetic creature, hopelessly bourgeois, almost past praying for, who can be called upon to pay for foreign missions or home missions or some new experiment, when his greatest need —and claim—is to be evangelized himself. Moreover a new generation is growing up within the Church which is in need of evangelization in relation to the world of its time. The easy assumption that children of Christian parents within the Church could be regarded automatically as committed Christians was a fatal fallacy of the past generation; the pressures of the world of our time are too frightening to let us cherish that now.

PERHAPS the most serious point which such discussions raise is the relation of evangelism and the local Church: here is a point which is felt in the mission field and in Western Europe. There are groups which have been evangelized which will not and even cannot be made to fit into the organization, and much more the atmosphere and assumptions, of the local church or congregation. The point can be easily seen in relation to caste and outcaste groups in India, but it has its relevance nearer home where a large influx of working class converts would disrupt many congregations. Whether, as some think, there is need of some form of organization between the congregation and the outsider, or whether some kind of proletarian Church may arise is a matter for further discussion.

The mere mention of this matter serves to underline an important consideration which needs greater attention than it has received. Evangelism is a dangerous undertaking except in the context of the Church. An evangelism which does not lead its converts into the full fellowship of the local congregation or which does not form new congregations is lacking in a necessary dimension. The issue, however, cuts both ways. Such evangelism is not likely to be carried out except from an evangelized Church and is not likely to reap its harvest unless the Church has remodelled itself so that it is ready, fitted and expecting to receive such new members. A great deal more thinking and action is needed upon what a really committed congregation means.*

The Mission and Unity of the Church

A Church or a congregation genuinely committed in this sense would find itself under obligations to its immediate neighbourhood and to areas more remote. Foreign missions and home missions spring from the same root of committal. They find exemplification in particular individuals and obviously a good deal of specialization is necessary if the whole task is to be carried out; the history of missionary societies and missionary orders through the centuries is ample evidence of that. It may, however, be questioned whether the specialization has not proceeded too far in some cases and that a measure of integration is now desirable.

The basic problem is plain: how are we to adjust the complexi-

*See, for example, *The Household of Faith*, by T. Ralph Morton. Iona Community. Price 6s. 6d.

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ties of our present situation to the essential teaching and example of the New Testament? There were diversities of function, but there can be no doubt that the Church was the Mission; there were apostles, but the whole Church was "apostolic," sent to confront the world (the whole inhabited earth or culture) with the witness to Jesus Christ. With what seems to us an amazingly small amount of organization the Church spread across the Roman world. Again, though there were tensions within it, there was no serious question as to the unity or wholeness of the Church. The Church means in the New Testament either the total body of believers or that wholeness manifested in a local group as in Corinth.

BY contrast our situation seems a mass of insoluble problems. The mission of the Church has developed into a mass of ill-regulated and badly co-ordinated missions and missionary societies. These are the fruits of a divided Church and also the results of tensions within particular denominations. Attempts to bring them together in national councils and in an international organization tend to reproduce these divisions on national and international scales. A similar process is at work within movements which seek the unity of the Churches: there is now a war of ecumenical organizations conducted with a bitterness which must strike the outsider as singularly unchristian. The impressive quality of some of these organizations seems to be marred by their inability to put down roots into the life of the ordinary congregation or parish.

The Church, as well as the world, is in a mess—but (once again) there would be something wrong with our theology if it were not. We cannot be the kind of Christians we are and expect much else than the kind of divisions and confusion in which (and through which) we have to carry out our vocation.

Light and Shade

There are other aspects of the picture. Perhaps the most refreshing are the efforts of orphaned missions, reconstruction and inter-church aid. Missions cut off from their base were able to carry on during the war and some of the disastrous effects of inflation and the post-war economy have been mitigated; churches have been rebuilt, pastors and workers restored to health, the hungry have been fed—all on a world-scale which, if never adequate to the problem, has been the greatest ever. Even here complacency is punctured by the fact that the greater burden has been undertaken by one confessional group—the Lutherans—and there are congregations and denominations which have made little or no response to the sufferings of fellow-Christians. Relief has in some cases tended to strengthen the old divisions and party lines. Nevertheless need has been met through ecumenical organizations and the higher flights of theological debate on unity have been offset by Christian relief on a world-wide front. The need is not over and new situations and demands are crying out for help, in Korea and the Near East, for example.*

* See *Report from Beirut, Fellowship in Christian Sharing* and *Europe's Homeless,* obtainable from Department of Inter-Church Aid, 17, Route de Malagnou, Geneva, Switzerland.

What has been done has been possible because the world-wide organization was there already, sometimes intended for other purposes but available and capable of being used to meet the clamant needs of divided and suffering Christian Churches.

Another feature of a different kind is the increasing centrality of the Bible and Bible-study in the conversations between Churches. Though there are wide divergences of interpretation, there is an increasing stress on the meaning of the Bible as a whole, on its relevance to the unity of the Church and its mission. The Bible is being allowed to speak to our divided Christianity more clearly and searchingly, in judgment and hope, it is becoming a bridge between men of differing traditions and emphases. Here again the work of scholars and leaders needs to be matched by a more widely and deeply diffused understanding of the message of the Bible among ordinary Christians; the work of the Bible-reading organizations has here a significance for unity which is not adequately realized.*

The Christian Witness to Peace

The Churches, and indeed the whole Western world, are being challenged by an active and noisy peace movement which indulges in such aggressive language that its aims are suspect in many quarters. This, however, is no excuse for a silence of the Churches on their positive Christian witness to the cause of peace.

It remains true that on the question of actual participation in war Christians remain hopelessly divided, though it is fair to say that there is more tolerance within the Churches for division of consciences in this matter. A recent discussion of this matter by an international body revealed the fact that in some countries which would claim to be Christian such rights of conscientious objection are not even recognized. The discussion tended to take the line that even where such rights of conscience are recognized there is a prior need to emphasize the duties related to the recognition of such rights.

There are also Christians on both sides of the aggressive peace movement which comes from beyond the Iron Curtain. The lack of communication makes understanding distressingly difficult, until the one Christian possibility is the duty of prayer for those who seem so divided from us and to whom we seem so remote and void of understanding.

The Place of the Laity

One of the curiosities which appears whenever Christian ministers consult together is the emphasis they put on the importance of the laity. The phenomenon appears so regularly that it is a little puzzling. Perhaps it is due to the modesty of the clergy or to some frustration in their efforts to reach declining congregations and the unchurched masses. It often takes the form of the claim that churchgoing laymen must make their Christian witness more effectively within their ordinary avocations. Such talk by the clergy is counterbalanced to some extent by the tendency within some laymen's organizations to seek more official recognition and support within the Church; this might betoken the ebb of a tide which has

* See *Who Reads the Bible?* in *World Dominion* for March-April, 1950.

been flowing a generation and more.

In a sense we are back at the problem which confronted us earlier. The New Testament view is clear—diversities of function, but one Church, with no division into clergy and laity. Indeed one scholar has pointed out that "laity" in the New Testament means the whole Church, the people (*laos*) of God. He has also pointed out that *all* Church members were ordained by the laying-on of hands following baptism. All of which only serves to indicate how far our present confusions are from New Testament theory and practice.

IT may be that the present emphasis on the laity is mistaken and dangerous. The economic future which faces many Churches would seem to involve the undertaking by laymen (whether ordained or not) of various duties hitherto performed by paid full-time clergy. On the other hand, in some Churches clergy are being trained to enter industry as ordinary workmen as a method of evangelism. Clergy and laity may have differing functions in the Church but the paramount obligation laid on all as Christians is their witness in whatever situation they may find themselves. Particular situations and vocations require differing techniques, which may be difficult to discover and to practise, but this is not to decry the more fundamental obedience which is required of all Christians as Christians, of the Church as a whole. Perhaps it is a mark of the narrow specialization of our time that in the Church we must now always think of clergy and laity as if they were entirely separate species of Christians. The priesthood of the laity and the humanity of the clergy might be a slogan for the new age!

Where does Reality lie?

The fashionable adjective of Christian conferences is nowadays the word "realistic." It is not easy to define what it means, which is perhaps an advantage: it may be what used to be called "facing the facts"; it may have some profound philosophic reference (only mediæval realism was in this connection highly unrealistic); it may be a kind of counter to Marxian materialism with its claim to scientific objectivity (and its unacknowledged character of extreme idealism). The adjective may point to some obscure psychological disturbance in our Christian leaders, some feeling that the Gospel is hardly relevant to what is going on in the world. Perhaps it is. The Gospel (if he ever heard of it) must have seemed odd and irrelevant to the mind of a Roman administrator in the first century: what would he have thought of the Book of Revelation or the Epistle to the Romans? Hardly "realistic"! The truth would seem to be that this fashionable jargon betrays an uneasiness, an insecurity in face of the facts. Faith is sometimes believing the incredible, and the Christian Gospel is that the incredible happened and will happen again and that the Church lives by proclaiming such faith and witnessing to it.

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